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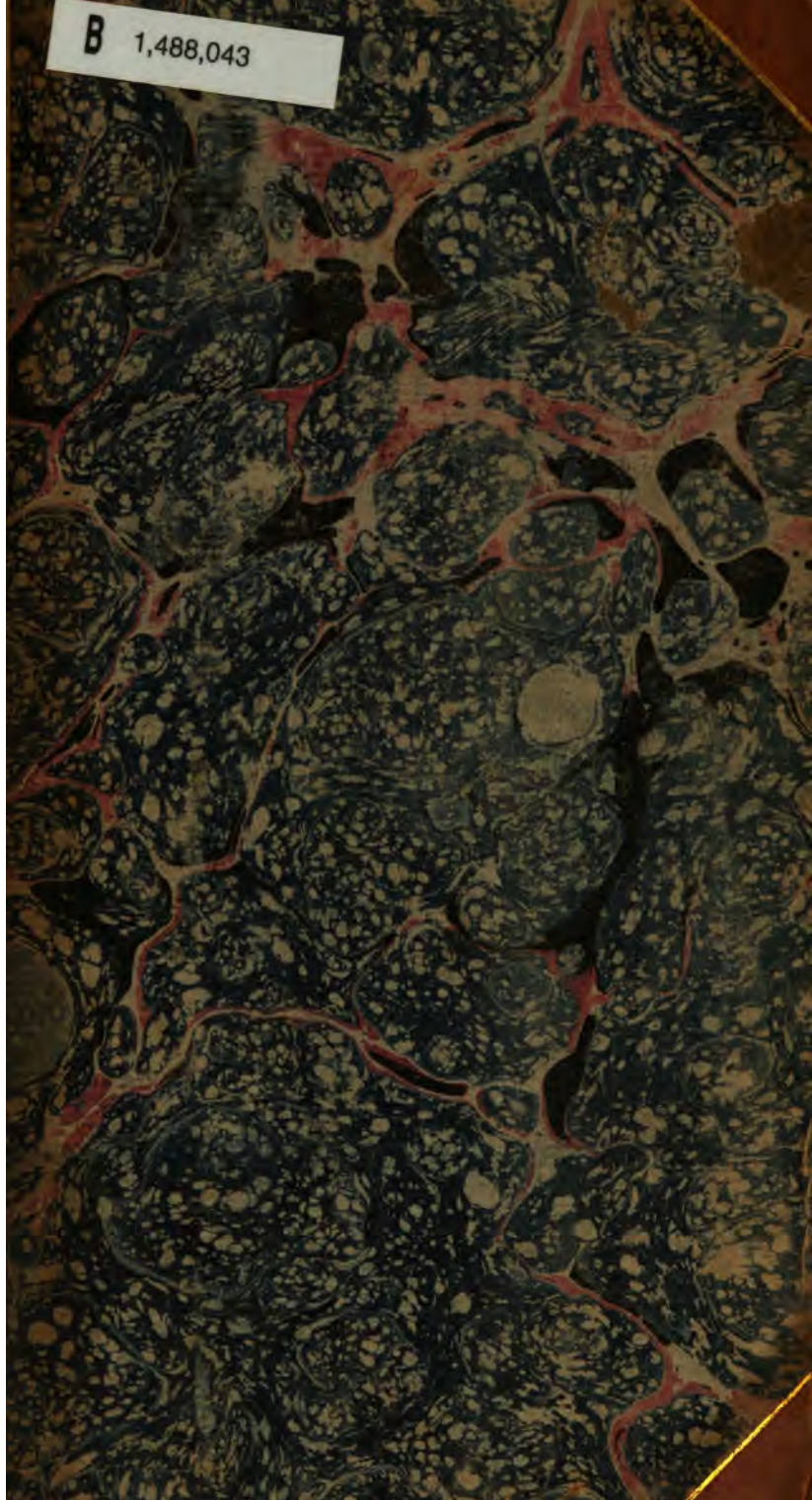
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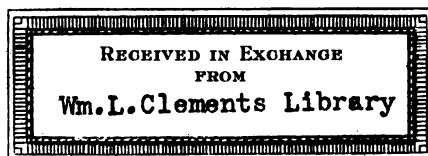
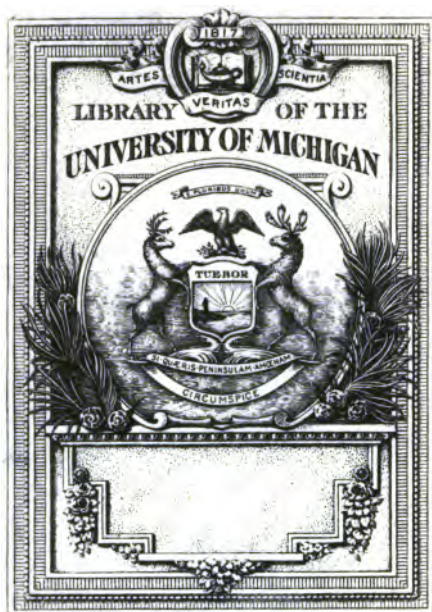
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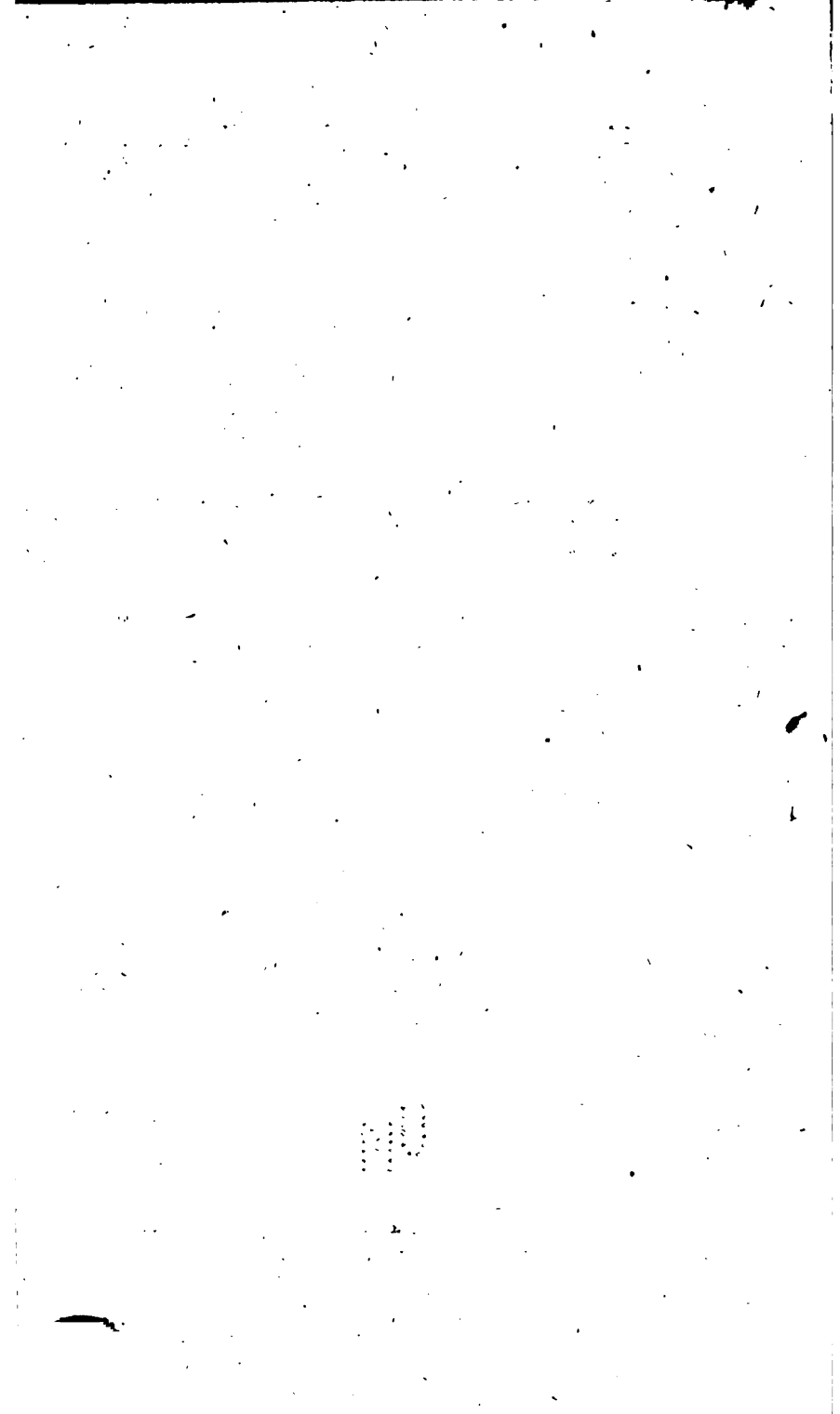
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HISTORY
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
Of the SECOND SESSION of the
HOUSE OF COMMONS,
OF THE
Fifteenth Parliament of GREAT BRITAIN,

ON the 27th of November 1781, the King opened the session with a speech, which the reader will find in the Debates of the House of Lords of this session. As soon as the Commons were returned to their own House, the Speaker stood up and said, that he had obtained a copy of the King's speech, which he read: after which the honourable Mr. *Percival* rose to move the address. He began with apologising for his undertaking to move the address, when the task was equal to the abilities of the oldest member. He had, however, the consolation, that, however defective he might be in point of eloquence, whatever he might utter on the subject would be sincere, and come from the heart, and he had besides the satisfaction of believing that there could not be a member in the whole House but would readily join with him in the motion he was about to make. The honourable gentleman said, that in a situation so truly alarming as the present, he felt exceedingly the difficulty of his task in proposing to the House a suitable address; but he declared, that it was his sincere and hearty conviction that no other than the firm resolution of Parliament to support the Crown, in the gracious intention which had been declared from the throne to prosecute the

Mr.
Percival.

war in which we were engaged, could extricate us from our perilous and awful situation. It was indeed true, that the events of the present campaign had been very unfortunate, and that the calamity in America was a circumstance which demanded the most serious regret and consideration; but notwithstanding these disasters and this gloom, he yet hoped to see his native country happy, secure, and glorious; and he had the most sanguine expectations of seeing peace restored between this country and America on terms the most friendly and advantageous to both. What his Majesty had mentioned in his most gracious speech was very true, that the war had been excited by the restless ambition of our enemies, and was maintained by that spirit; but if it should be true, that there had been found men in that House so lost to duty, to honour, and to shame, to express their warm wishes for the success of the enemies of this country, to glory in their conquests, and to boast of the countenance that they gave to their rebellion, he believed that there would be little hesitation in declaring that a great part of our present calamity was to be attributed to this cause; especially when they knew, that men of eminence, men distinguished by their abilities and connections, had done this, and incited America to resistance, by the friendship which they professed, and by insinuating and proclaiming, that the people were favourable to their cause. The public were not to despair. Too much, he observed, had been thrown out that had a direct tendency thereto, and foreigners in particular were apt to be led away with it as the real and genuine feelings of the kingdom at large. Mr. Percival expatiated pretty largely on the topic, and hoped nothing like alarm to the people would be given in the course of the debate; the eyes of all Europe, at least of every power concerned in the present war, he said, were fixed on the legislature of Great-Britain, not only on the Parliament but on each individual member, and on the general spirit of firmness conclusions of the most important kind would very naturally be drawn. It therefore became incumbent on the House to avoid every thing that might possibly be construed into an appearance of despondency. Were the calamities of this country so great as some had represented, and her resources so much exhausted as her enemies were led to think them, no one would feel himself more uneasy than he should; but he believed the case to be far otherwise. He was far from thinking this country undone, though in danger. It was true, that she was plunged in a war,

war, which naturally brought upon her an immense load of debt. War was inseparable from expence, and the House would please to recollect that the present one must in its nature be particularly so, we not only being engaged in war with America, but also with France, and Spain, and the States of Holland. The honourable gentleman admitted that things had not turned out so favourably as the justness of our cause had deserved, but was of opinion, that nothing more was required than unanimity amongst ourselves to defeat our combined enemies, and restore Great-Britain to its wonted lustre and renown. Under this idea, he exhorted, in strong and forcible terms, the total extinction of party. He intreated the House to drop every little personal consideration, and join in the prosecution of the war with that unanimity which alone could give it efficacy, and which would bid fair to terminate it to the honour and interest of Great-Britain. The people of England, he said, were not to be dispirited and sunk on account of a disagreeable event or two, and he thought the House bound to approach the throne with expressions of the strongest gratitude for the declaration his Majesty had been pleased to make, that neither his own desire for peace, nor any temporary inconvenience of his subjects, should induce him to give up essential rights and permanent interests, on which the propriety and felicity of the British empire would ever principally depend. He concluded with moving, "that an humble address, &c.

Mr. *Thomas Orde* rose to second the motion. He began with apologising for his intrusion on the House, and lamenting that so difficult a task should be assigned to him. He said, that he had not a doubt, whatever were the little debates and divisions of the House, that they were all actuated by the same spirit of true patriotism and of disinterested regard for the public good, and that they were all anxious for the restoration of that grandeur, security, and happiness, in which we lived before the present disturbances. If this was the general desire, he would take upon him to say, that it could only be gratified and fulfilled by magnanimity and unanimity. The cordial efforts of all his Majesty's subjects would be irresistible. They had hitherto astonished the world, nay now they raised its admiration in shewing them that we are able to meet so many powerful foes without the assistance of a single friend. The address which had been proposed by his honourable friend, entirely and fully met his ideas and approbation. They must not be depressed by dis-

Mr.
Tho. Orde.

after; calamity called for fortitude and exertion, and the dignity of the British senate now required that they should seriously and firmly resolve on the best means of supporting the empire against the machinations and the efforts of our enemies. He declared that he approved of the designs of ministers with respect to America; if they were formed to re-establish the commercial rights or advantage of Great-Britain on terms not unbeneficial to America, and if their object had been to recover our dominions, to cement anew the bond of union, to rescue America from foreign and domestic tyranny, and to fix a justly qualified dependence on the mother country. And it was also friendly, paternal to America herself, to endeavour to restore her to the secure happiness of a connection with this country, in preference to the insidious friendship of that power which had interfered, in order to foment the quarrel, and separate her from this country. The colonies were sacrificing their true interests to mad ambition and impolitic revenge. They had providentially yielded up to France the possession of their harbours, and he would venture to say, they now prematurely rejoiced in the introduction and success of her armies. For what was herein the object of France? Not alone to devise the destruction of this country, but to prolong the horrors of civil war in that; not to terminate it even in favour of her new allies till they should discover too late that they had borrowed assistance of a pernicious usurer, to whom, having been obliged to grant mortgage after mortgage, they should find themselves at last stripped of the whole estate which they had refused to hold under the advantageous guardianship of those who, after having driven the encroacher from their borders, gave them the security to make it valuable. Would we tamely suffer America to become the ally of France; perhaps, and most likely, to become the subject or the slave? As to the consequences of the war, he would not deny but that they were heavily experienced by the people. But it was impossible for it to be otherwise. All wars were expensive, and particularly the present one, when we were engaged against America, and France, and Spain, and Holland. He would also admit that affairs had not fallen out so well as might have been expected. In which recital of the chief circumstances of our situation, he had purposely chosen to treat the subject as rather serious than pleasing, because he should think he offended against the spirit and dignity of the House, and against the candour and impartiality on which he would

wish to establish the strength of his arguments, if he failed to present the most unfavourable idea he could conceive of our public affairs, and did not seek thereupon to consider what effect they should have on our public conduct; and if in this view of them, there was no reason to think them desperate, or to abate our courage and resolution, whatever more agreeably might be fairly added, should tend to give us the first encouragement of hope. He recited the story of our troubles, not to depress or sink the spirit of his countrymen, but to rouse and invigorate it; not to bid them despair of their country, but to convince them that their own magnanimity, their virtue, and their union, were alone necessary to protect and upraise it.

The honourable gentleman would not enter into the cause and progress of the American war, the narrative of which had so often been heard, perhaps impatiently, in that House. But thus far he would venture to say, that he had sufficient justification from many gentlemen in opposition to declare, that the quarrel was at first a favourite in the nation; the cause and objects of it approved and encouraged; and that it was not merely the project of Administration; that he did not know what should induce us to believe, that though the views of government might naturally be favourable and perhaps partial to Great-Britain, they were ever bent on injustice or rigour to America. He could not conceive any foundation for the charge of unrelenting persecution, or that such a spirit was not to be mitigated till after the most oppressive and ungenerous triumph over unconditional submission. That he was not in the secrets of government, nor meant to pay any unmanly compliments to the measures of administration; but that he sincerely thought them in regard to America less inimical in design and execution than she had been to herself; and if therefore the motives of the war were not founded in any unworthy species or degree of avarice or ambition, but arose only, as he hoped, from a desire of re-union on terms of mutual advantage, there could not surely, whatever unforeseen and unfortunate circumstances had enlarged the sphere and increased the calamities of it, be made a retrospect of complaint, though there might be of sorrow, for the prosecution of it. It was not his purpose to examine the probable causes of our not having succeeded by persuasion or force to put an end to this most unfortunate war. He was not a competent judge of the means used, or the manner of employing them. More material considerations

considerations now required their immediate and earnest attention for the purpose of directing their future conduct.

The people were not, he hoped, to be cast down by a temporary distress; that he hoped, however deeply we might feel affected by the misfortune to our country, in the loss which had befallen its forces in Virginia, we should not be insensible of a grateful compassion to them and to their very deserving, though most unfortunate, commander. He hoped, that when he should return to his country, we should receive him with our praises; that we should thank him, and with more justice than the Romans did their unsuccessful commander; because we had to remember the prelude of his victories, and that the first story of his achievements was not the surrender of the gallant army.

The honourable gentleman attributed the ill success of our arms in America to the perfidy and ambition of the French, and defended administration in not having any ally. That we had not, he said, was not the fault of Government. If those powers, whose interest it was to be with us, or whom gratitude ought to have bound to us, had been led to act otherwise than they ought to have done, who was to be charged with any crime on that account? The ministry could not help it. He said, that if the sure accomplishment of the great wish and desire of them all depended on the result of their debates, he had no doubt that the general voice would be for peace. That more perfect attainment and security of that blessing had been the object of the war, and had made them pray for victory. It must be the wish of the king, who would find his own joy in the restoration of ease and happiness to his people: it must be the wish of the ministers, because while knowing it to be the desire of their master they would therein find relief from the anxieties and perils which now surround them; the great body of the nation must desire it, because they feel the accumulation of those expences which arise from the war, how sensible soever they may be in the necessity for continuing it. This sad necessity however seems still to exist, as the malice and ambition of our enemies appear yet to be implacable. He said, that he could not believe that though the assistance or effectual mediation of some friendly power was delayed, it was decisively refused to us. It was now however necessary to regard ourselves as unsupported by foreign alliance; and we were of course to make greater exertions of our own united resources. All that remained for us to do in such a situation,

situation, was to put forth every means in our power to subdue the common enemy, and look to the internal defence of the kingdom; and this he believed had been done. The militia of this country, he said, were composed of such a body of men and commanded by such officers, as made our dependence upon them altogether prudent and secure, while it left government at liberty to employ her troops on a more distant service. The honourable gentleman again strongly pressed the House to become unanimous in their resolutions; and was of opinion that nothing could tend to restore the greatness of this country but a successful prosecution of the war, which might lead to such a peace as would accord with the honour and dignity of Great-Britain. He was therefore for offering his Majesty every assistance in their power: and that since they must appear in lamentation for the troubles and distresses of their country, they should recollect and take example by that mourning which they read of in the history of these kingdoms, and appear before their sovereign in suits of armour. As he had said before, the picture of the country was more serious than pleasing, but it was by no means desperate: it was a moment for enterprise, and not for despondency. We must agree to prosecute effectual and vigorous measures, and do it without any little division about the manner of our exertions. The address moved for did not point out any particular place as the theatre of war; it did not bind the House to the prosecution of it in any particular shape; they therefore would not now hesitate in carrying up to the throne their unanimous offer of support, from any difference of opinion with respect to the particular measures to be observed in prosecuting the future operations of government. It would be time to disagree about specific measures when specific measures came to be proposed. In one thing, as he had said, they must be all agreed, and it became them to be seriously so, in the desire of snatching the empire from the midst of her enemies, and restoring her by our vigour to the eminence which she was accustomed to hold among nations. The address moved for, was calculated to promote this end, and therefore he was happy to second the honourable mover.

Mr. Fox, in a speech of considerable length, entered with Mr. Fox. his usual ability and success into the merits of the important question, of continuing or abandoning the American war. He said, that he rose to move the amendment to the address for the same reason that the honourable gentlemen had risen
to

to propose and second it. The task had been assigned to them because they were young men, and young members of that House. There was a favour about youth which recommended its actions; but there was more than the favour of youth requisite to give grace to the motion for an address to the throne on the present occasion; it required the benefit of inexperience, the recommendation of ignorance; for what man, who had observed the conduct of ministers for the last two Parliaments, who had been members of that House, and had had opportunity of knowing the measures of government, could have been brought by any means to disgrace himself by the motion? The most servile or the most profligate adherent of ministry, however he might have gained a seat in that House, or however submissive he might have been redressed by pension or place, (and that there were such members was but too true) could have been brought to move for this address, if he had been for any time a member? It was therefore with prudence assigned to the present gentlemen, because they were fortunately unacquainted with what had been seen and executed in that House. He was ready to do justice to the discernment of ministers in this respect: but for the same reason that they had moved and seconded the address, he now rose to propose the amendment. Though he was a young man, he could not be called a young member of the House. He had been present and seen the whole system of his Majesty's ministers; had heard their progressive madness, impolicy, or treachery; and he was now confounded at their presuming to look the Commons' House of Parliament in the face, much more to sit and hear such an address to the throne moved for at such a time. That they should dare to bring down such a speech after what they had done, was to him a subject of astonishment, nay a subject of horror. It shewed that they were divested of all modesty as well as principle, and that they had the dreadful resolution of going on to the last act of the tragedy, and completing the ruin which they had so successfully begun.

There never was any moment when it was so necessary for him to take notice that the speech from the throne was not to be considered as the speech of the King, but of his Ministers. The present was the most extraordinary that he had ever known. — He must pause a while on the audacity of Ministers, (for he could give it no gentler term) in putting such language into the mouth of the sovereign. If men were
unacquainted

unacquainted with the nature of our constitution, and knew that the speech was contrived by a cabinet-council, what would they pronounce the present speech from the throne to be?—what! but that it was the speech of some arbitrary, despotic, hard-hearted, and unfeeling monarch, who, having involved the slaves, his subjects, in a ruinous and unnatural war, to glut his enmity or to satiate his revenge, was determined to persevere in spite of calamity, and even of fate.—That it was the speech of a monarch incapable of feeling his own misfortunes, or of sympathizing with the sorrows of his people, when the high prerogative of his despotic will was disputed; for despotic monarchs were the most tenacious of their rights, as they called them, and allowed nothing to feelings or to the comforts of their fellow creatures. The speech spoke out a bold and sanguine language, and he was glad of it. It was better that the people should know what they were to expect, and what to suffer, than that an insidious air of lenient intentions should cover and conceal the same dreadful plan. But he called upon every honest man in the House to say if it was not his firm dependence and trust to have heard a very different speech on that day. He would refer it to the candid feelings of every man in the House. He had not been many days in town, but he had been long enough to hear and collect the opinions of men, and he declared that it was the general sentiment, that we should have heard his Majesty on that day, declare from his throne, “that he had been deceived and imposed upon by misinformation and misrepresentation; that, in consequence of his delusion, the Parliament had been deluded, but that now the deception was at an end. He saw that he had been in an error, and that he and his people had suffered enough from the consequences of it. That therefore, he requested of his Parliament to devise the most speedy and direct means of putting an end to the calamities, and restoring peace, security, and happiness to his dominions.” He said, that this was the general opinion; but instead of this, they had heard a speech, breathing vengeance, blood, misery, and rancour. It spoke exactly this language; “Much has been lost, much blood, much treasure, has been squandered; the burthens of my people are almost intolerable; but my passions are yet ungratified, my object of subjugation and of revenge is yet unfulfilled, and therefore I am determined to persevere.” This was the language; and for this language the Minister was answerable. The men who had brought us to our present situation, and

reduced us from the splendor, and the strength, and the happiness which we enjoyed, to the disgrace, the weakness, and the danger into which we stood at present, yet dared to come forward, and tell the representatives of the people of England, that they were not yet satisfied; that they had not yet done enough; that they determined to persevere in the American war, and to spend more of the treasure, and lavish more of the blood of these very people, although there was a general clamour against it, and out of that House the loudest disapprobation was expressed, and the most direct condemnation of the system.

There was one thing which he must take notice of: the honourable gentleman who had made the motion had been unadvised. He had lavished part of that oratory in an attack which was all necessary to defence. He advised him to husband his abilities, and reserve them all for the defence of the ministry below him, rather than waste them in attacking the opposition. He had charged them with expressing joy at the triumphs of America. It would have been becoming in him to have had one quality of youth, candour, on the occasion, and to have stated fairly what he chose to represent. It was true he had said in a former session, that it was his sincere opinion that if the ministry had succeeded in their first scheme on the liberties of America, the liberties of this country would have been at an end; and thinking this (as he did) in the sincerity of an honest heart, he was pleased with the resistance which they had met to their attempt. If the honourable gentleman had thought the same thing, if he had joined him in the opinion that ministry, if they had succeeded in their first attack upon America, would afterwards have succeeded in an attack upon Britain; he no doubt would have wished success to American resistance, at least if he had been an honest man, he would. This was his opinion, it had always been so; he might be wrong, but he from his heart believed it; and he called upon the honourable gentleman, when he next mentioned the assertion, to take notice also, as in candour he ought, of the opinion that accompanied it. The great and glorious statesman, whose memory every gentleman would revere (the Earl of Chatham) entertained this opinion in the very commencement of the dispute; and feeling for the liberties of his native country, thanked God that America had resisted the claims of this country. But "all the calamities were to be ascribed to the wishes, and the joy, and the speeches of opposition."

Oh

Oh miserable and unfortunate ministry! Oh blind and incapable men! whose measures are framed with so little foresight, and executed with so little firmness, that they not only crumble to pieces, but bring on the ruin of their country, merely because one rash, weak, or wicked man in the House of Commons makes a speech against them! Oh, what miserable statesmen must these be, who frame their measures in so weak and wretched a manner as to make no provision for the contingencies of fortune, nor for the rash passions; and say, if it pleases the House, the wicked passions of men! Could they expect that there would be no rash, no weak, no wicked men in this kingdom; or were they so rash, so weak, and so wicked, as to contrive measures of such a texture that the intervention of any unforeseen circumstance broke them to pieces, and with their failure destroyed the empire of which they had the government! It was said against administration, that they had no responsibility. People desired to know who was the minister, and who was answerable for the iniquitous measures of government? The ministry felt the difficulty of the question, and hesitated a long time in the answer; but at last, having found out an expedient, they exclaimed in triumph, "Oh, yes, responsibility! to be sure there must be responsibility! there are persons accountable to the people for the measures of government!" Who are they? "The persons," reply the ministry, "are responsible, who have always opposed our measures." This was the strange and the ridiculous manner in which they argued, and in which they endeavoured to shuffle themselves out of responsibility which they knew to be so dangerous. If they had succeeded, they would have taken all the credit and all the praise to themselves; but because they have failed, they throw the blame upon those men who endeavoured to prevent the calamities by stopping the cause; they threw it upon the men who saw them in their career to a dreadful precipice, determined to throw themselves from the immeasurable height, careless of the death that must ensue from dashing on the rocks and plunging into the sea below, and who endeavoured in vain to stop them in this mad intent. They seized us upon the brink, say ministry, and by their efforts to stop us, prevented us from taking the glorious leap which we had intended: if they had suffered us to dash into the abyss without molestation, then we should have been happy.—When this sort of language was held, he had always treated it with silent ridicule; and if he had now given it any

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serious

serious reception, he begged the House to pardon him; it was unintentionally if he had, for it merited nothing but ridicule and contempt.

The honourable gentleman who had seconded the motion said, that "the House had impatiently heard narratives of the American war, and of the measures that had led to it, and he trusted that there would be no more retrospective censure in the present moment." Impatiently! Had the House heard them impatiently! Ministers must bear to hear them again, and on that day they must hear them; that was the day when the representatives of the people must re-call to the ears of his Majesty's ministers the disgraceful and ruinous measures that had brought us to this state. They must hear of them not *only* here, but he trusted, that by the aroused indignation and vengeance of an injured and undone people, they must hear of them at the tribunal of justice, and expiate them on the public scaffold. He saw an honourable gentleman smile at the word scaffold, [the Lord Advocate of Scotland]. What did not the learned gentleman think that it was yet time for punishment? Had they not in his imagination done enough, or had they more calamities to inflict, more negligence to exemplify, or rather more treachery to complete? What was the learned gentleman's opinion? When did he think the fit moment would arrive, when suffering would be supineness, and retribution be just! It was his opinion that the day was now approaching, it was at hand, when the public would no longer submit nor the ministry escape. Their conduct was unprecedented in any age or in any history; it beggared the records of nations: for in all the annals of kingdoms ruined by weakness, or ruined by treachery, there was not an instance so glaring as the present, of a country ruined by a set of men, without the confidence, the love, or the opinion of the people, and who yet remained secure amidst the storms of public disaster. The honourable gentleman, who had seconded the motion, had called for unanimity. He demanded to know if they meant to insult that side of the House when they asked for unanimity, and designed to continue the American war? They had opposed it from its commencement; they had opposed it in all its progress; they had warned, supplicated, and threatened; they had predicted every event, and in no one instance had they failed in predicting the fatal consequences that had ensued from their obstinacy or from their treason.

If

If in a moment like the present, a moment of impending ruin, men who loved their country could have any comfort, he confessed he must feel it as a comfort and consolation, that when the history of this dreadful period should come to be written by a candid and impartial man, he must proclaim to posterity, that the friends with whom he had the honour to act were not to be charged with the calamities or system. In justice to them he must declare, that they did all that men could do to avert the evils, to direct them to a more safe and honourable track, but they failed in their anxious endeavours to save their country. Thus much at least the historian would say, and they would be exempted from sharing the condemnation, though they must suffer the calamity in common with the rest of their unhappy fellow-subjects.

The honourable gentleman had told us, that we must not despond; and at the same time he had given us a picture of our situation, which he confessed to be more serious than pleasing. He talked hope to the ear, but he had spoken despondency to the heart. This was his serious picture, and a most serious one it was. You are now suffering these things from measures the most wise, the most prudent, the most necessary, executed with firmness and with foresight, and in a case the most just and upright. Was it so? then how much farther distant from despondency was the picture which he would give than this serious, but not desponding, picture of the honourable gentleman. I cannot, says the honourable gentleman, express my sentiments of the situation of this country better than by applying to it the address of the celebrated orator, Demosthenes, to the Athenians. "I should (says he) deject and despair, I should consider your situation as desolate and irreparable, if I did not reflect that you have been brought to this state by weak and improvident measures, and by weak and treacherous men. If your affairs had been managed wisely, if your operations had been firm and steady, and after all you had been reduced to this situation, should have indeed despaired of deliverance; but as you have been reduced by weak and by bad men, I trust you may be recovered by wise and by upright governors. Change your system and you may yet flourish; persevere, and you must be ruined." This was exactly his opinion of the present situation of this country: If their cause had been just and virtuous, if their measures had been wise and vigorous, if their ministers had been capable

capable and zealous, and after all we had been brought to our present situation, he should have despaired of deliverance; but as it was there were yet hopes, by substituting a just and a virtuous system in lieu of the present oppressive and disgraceful one, by substituting wise and vigorous measures in room of the present ridiculous and impotent schemes, by substituting activity and zeal in the place of indolence and treachery, and by changing in short the whole plan and conduct of government. It was not his motive for this advice that he wished to succeed to those places of trust; he sincerely wished their present possessors good of them; they had rendered the offices of trust and power most unenviable to men who loved their honour, and whose only object in accepting them would be to promote the splendour, the security, and the happiness of this country. Let them, in the name of Heaven, enjoy the emoluments for which they have lavished so much; and if our ruin must be accomplished, let it be completed by the same baneful hands.

The honourable gentleman exhibited two pictures of this country; the one representing her at the end of the last glorious war, the other at the present moment. At the end of the last war this country was raised to a most dazzling height of splendour and respect. The French marine was in a manner annihilated, the Spanish rendered contemptible; the French were driven from America; new sources of commerce were opened, the old enlarged; our influence extended to a predominance in Europe, our empire of the ocean established and acknowledged, and our trade filling the ports and harbours of the wondering and admiring world. Now mark the degradation and the change. We have now lost thirteen provinces of America, we have lost several of our Islands, and the rest are in danger; we have lost the empire of the sea; we have lost our respect abroad and our unanimity at home; the nations have forsaken us, they see us distracted and obstinate, and they leave us to our fate. Country! "This *was* your husband; this *is* your husband." This was your situation, when you were governed by whig ministers and by whig measures, when you were warmed and instigated by a just and a laudable cause, when you were united and impelled by the confidence which you had in your ministers, and when they again were strengthened and emboldened by your ardour and enthusiasm. This is your situation, when you are under the conduct of tory ministers and a tory system, when you are disunited, disheartened,
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and have neither confidence in your ministers nor union among yourselves. When your cause is unjust and your conductors are either impotent or treacherous. He said, that he should not go into a minute detail of the transactions of ministers in this accursed war, but only trace them through the leading features, which would shew the plan and system that they pursued. They commenced war against America after that country had offered the fairest propositions, and extended her arms to receive us into the closest and nearest connection. They did this contrary to their own sentiments of what was right, but they were over-ruled by that high and secret authority which they durst not disobey, and from which they derive their situations; they were ordered to go on with the American war or quit their places. They preferred emolument to duty, and kept their ostensible power at the expence of their country. To delude the Parliament and the people, they then described the contest to be a mere squabble. It was not America with whom we had to contend; it was with Hancock and his crew: A handful of men would march triumphant from one end of the continent to the other. This was the language sounded in that House, and for this language a learned member of it was exalted to the dignity of a peer, and enrolled among the hereditary council of the realm, [he meant Lord Loughborough]. He was thus rewarded for no other merit that he could ever discover but that of vehemently abusing our fellow subjects in America, and calling their opposition the war of Hancock and his crew.

Having by misrepresentation deluded the Parliament into the contest, they endeavour to continue the delusion by promising the country gentlemen a revenue from America. This, like all the rest of their fictions, was what they did not themselves believe, but it was necessary to the occasion. They saw the French raising an armament in their ports; great preparations were evidently making, which demanded the notice and the inquiry of the British Ministry long before they openly professed this resolution to support the independence of America. What did our ministry do? they suffered these armaments to go on, they came down day after day, and professed that France was friendly in her dispositions; nay, after they knew that the propositions were hostile against Britain; that they were intended to resist us in our attempts upon America; when it was no longer in the power of ministry to conceal the irksome truth, and when they were

were galled with what was told them of it in that House, they adjourned it for a considerable time, just previous to the conclusion of the treaty between France and America. Why did they do all this? because if they had not they must have been forced to go to war with France at a much earlier period than they did, which they could not have done without giving up the American war; the object of their ambition, because the parent of their fortune, and the tenor on which they held their power. They had wilfully and positively plunged this country into a war with France, with Spain, and with Holland, by a treacherous acquiescence with the designs of France for the mere love and attachment that they had to the American war. If they had crushed the preparations of France in their infancy; if they had called her to a peremptory account before their naval equipments were matured; would any man breathing say, or suspect that the French would have dared to act as they did, or presume to go to war with the whole strength of this country, undivided, unweakened, by the prosecution of a mad war against her Colonies? Surely not. But they pursued another policy. He would not say that he believed they were paid by France; it was not possible for him to prove the fact; but he would venture to say, that they deserved to be paid by the grand monarch, for they had served him more faithfully, and more successfully than ever ministers served a master. If the French king heaped treasures upon their heads; if he exhausted his Exchequer to enrich them; if he even drained his resources for their sake, he purchased the aggrandizement of his kingdom at an easy rate; for they had done more for its permanent advantage, more towards the accomplishment of the grand object of French ambition, that of universal monarchy, than all the preceeding administrations that ever France had employed, nay more than all the little achievements of Louis le Grand. He, in his aim to acquire universal monarchy, grasped only at the conquest or the purchase of a few barrier towns, and by pursuing this impolitic means, had exasperated and roused Europe against him. But the present system of France had been more deeply and more sagaciously laid. If there should be a deliberation between the king of France and his subjects on the best means of extending and establishing the projected universal monarchy; what would be the tenor of their conversation? We must, the king would say, weaken and destroy our grand and most formidable rival, Great-Britain. To be sure, reply the subjects; but this cannot be done without diminishing and

and exhausting ourselves. Yes, says the king; we shall not strike a blow; we will make them cut and mangle one another; we will employ our ministers; those ministers who are paid by Great-Britain for doing our business, to go to war with their master's subjects and destroy themselves. This accordingly is done. The prime minister of France, whom, says the honourable gentleman, I now see sitting over against me, goes to war with America for the maintenance of rights, of trifles that were never disputed, and remains deaf and blind to the calamities and the intreaties of the people. Oh! but, say the subjects of France, Britain will triumph if we do not interfere. Then, says the monarch, we shall interfere; after deluding these men with empty unmeaning professions, which no creatures but themselves would believe; we will come in at the critical moment to give the finishing stroke to American independence. All this will be great, will be masterly; the subjects would reply: Britain will be weakened; but by this we shall only have an equal share in the circulating commerce of America: Nay, we shall do more, says the king, we shall conciliate the affections of America; we will conclude a treaty with America, and by being instrumental to her independence, incline her by obligations to a preference in favour of France." All this may be supposed to have occurred between the king of France and his subjects; and still farther it might have been said, that in order to complete the design of establishing an universal monarchy, they must destroy the other rival powers of Europe; the naval powers were the most to be dreaded, and, after Britain, of these naval powers the Dutch were the first to be overthrown. How could they do that without weakening themselves? Why, replies the king of France, how but by instigating our faithful servants, the ministers of Great-Britain, to go to war with their nearest, dearest, and best friends the Dutch. True, their interests are inseparable; they are like the right hand and the left of one immense and terrible body; by a brotherly combination of strength and action they are irresistible, and the House of Bourbon must fall before them; but divide them, nay, not only separate, but set them to tear one another, and they will crumble before us. To do this would be impracticable with any other set of men; but nothing is impossible for those ministers in the scale of absurdity or madness to attempt. This would no doubt be said, and what must be the astonishment, what the feelings, what the transport of Frenchmen, when they perceived Bri-

tain go to war with the Dutch without a cause, for he declared he never yet could discover a cause for which we went to war with that power, forgetting all the interests, all the policy, and all the connection by which we had ever been, and ought always to be guided with respect to her. What must have been the exultation of Frenchmen, when they saw the fleets of Admiral Parker and Admiral Zoutman; fleets that ought never to have met in any sea but on terms of friendship, meet to tear one another to pieces: in short, it was impossible for any set of men, however well inclined they might be to favour the interests of France, to serve her more effectually than his Majesty's ministers had done; and yet we were constantly hearing the ministry exclaim against the perfidy of France: they made his Majesty, from the throne, speak in the same stile of the restless ambition, and the perfidy of France. He exceedingly wished, that as we could not give them hard blows, we would be decent enough not to give them hard words: but it was the fashion of his Majesty's ministers; they loved to talk in bitter terms. But why was the perfidy of France so bitterly inveighed against? Was that any thing new? Was the treachery of France of a late date, or her enmity to this country, or her desire to weaken us, or her restless ambition? They were all established as axioms in politics; and none but the present statesmen would have suffered themselves to be deluded by professions to the contrary, however speciously they might be made, especially when there was incontestible evidence against them, in the preparations which they were making in all their ports.

The honourable gentleman who had seconded the motion, had strongly called for unanimity, and afterwards recommended the prosecution of the American war. Were the Ministry confident enough to expect that there could be unanimity on that subject? Had they not, from the outset, declared their firm unequivocal abhorrence of it? Had they not declared and predicted what had come to pass? Had they not by every argument and means which respectful zeal could suggest, called upon, urged, and instigated them to put an end to a war which could only be productive of ruin and disgrace. Every period of it had been marked with disaster, and the last misfortune was such, as took away the final hope, even of the most violent abettors of the war. The honourable gentleman had said, that we could not blame the unfortunate and gallant Lord who commanded the brave army in Virginia; that we must receive him with praises; for

for victories had been the preludes to the surrender of his army. He would join that gentleman in bestowing the warmest praises on that noble Earl; for not to him did he impute the disaster, but to the Ministry, by whose savage obstinacy he was ordered to persevere in an expedition against the evidence both of fact and reason. But had not all the transactions of this war been of the same sort? Had not all the generals been brave, and all unfortunate? The conquest of Ticonderago had concluded in the surrender of Saratoga. The victory of Brandywine had ended in the recall of Sir William Howe; and the battle of Camden in the capitulation at York. It had been with Earl Cornwallis as it was with General Burgoyne:

“The paths of glory led but to the grave.”

It had always happened so, and it must always happen so in the prosecution of this disastrous war. Gen. Burgoyne had been brave; Gen. Burgoyne had failed; and Gen. Burgoyne had been reviled, persecuted, and proscribed; so had Gen. Sir William Howe; so, perhaps, in his turn, would the brave and unfortunate Earl Cornwallis. Though he did not know where these candid men intended to fix the blame; whether upon Lord Cornwallis, or on Sir Henry Clinton, or on both; or on Admiral Graves, or on all. But it would soon be discovered; their dirty literary engines would be set to work, and calumny would come forth in all the insidious garbs that inventive malice could suggest. They would place the blame any where, but in the right place; in their own weakness, obstinacy, inhumanity or treason. To some one of these causes the blame was to be attributed, and not to any failure in the execution of their plans. Two years since, a right honourable friend of his had moved the House, that our troops should be withdrawn from America, under a firm persuasion, that the French troops joined to the Americans, would be irresistible; and that left to themselves, their jealousy of one another, and their passions might be favourable to Great-Britain. The motion was rejected, because, oh! it was not possible that the Americans could suffer a French army to enter into their provinces! So little did his Majesty's Ministers know of the intentions, or of the disposition of the people with whom they were at war. The event now confirmed the idea of his right hon. friend, whose military knowledge of the Colonies would not be disputed. Now then, put a period to the contest. The French and the Americans are joined;—The French and the Americans have taken an army. There was no part of the unfortunate disaster at York-town so portentous as that circumstance, or that gave him so much concern. It led to more fatal consequences than the loss of

seven thousand men. The circumstance of this conquest being accomplished by the combined army of France and Americans, would superinduce a claim of acknowledgment, and of gratitude, that would tie the two people together in an alliance of friendship, and give rise to commercial connections, which would shut out the only prospect that remained for this country of re-establishing a friendly intercourse with America, and having the benefit of her trade. Some of the persons belonging to his Majesty's Council were not so sanguine as others. Some, for whom he entertained respect, as private gentlemen, were not so sanguine as to believe, that if the people of America were really determined against us, we could ever reduce them to obedience. One of these, for whom he had great respect, a right honourable gentleman on the floor (Mr. Rigny) said, upon the capture of Charles-town, that if that event did not produce fortunate conclusions in our favour, he should despair of success, and be ready to acknowledge, that it was an improper and mad thing to continue the contest. Now then, he called upon the right honourable gentleman to stand up, and in the face of the world act up to his promises, for it now was proved, that the capture of Charles-town had concluded in the surrender of an army. Had any other consequence risen from it? No; none. The right honourable gentleman, who professed to be open, and disdained the insidious dealing of saying one thing one day, and another the next, just as it might suit the occasion, would rise, therefore, he trusted, and call upon his Majesty's Ministers to put an end to this war.

There was one circumstance in the conduct and language both of the Ministers and of men of all parties, which he could not help taking notice of; it was, that amidst all their sorrow for the loss of Earl Cornwallis and his brave army, there was one thing which gave them great consolation, and for which they were grateful: it was, that our fleet had not ventured to fight the enemy. Hear it, Mr. Speaker, says the honourable gentleman; it is a source of joy, new in the history of Britain, that we rejoice on the occasion of one of our fleets not venturing to meet and fight the enemy. To this even were we reduced, and our joy on the circumstance was well founded. The honourable gentleman who seconded the motion had given great praise to Earl Cornwallis, and justly so, as he had already said; but in his opinion, the most brilliant part of the noble Earl's conduct was, that even in the midst of his embarrassment, in the very moment of peril, when he expected every hour to be assaulted, and himself, with the whole army, to be put to the sword, he retained and expressed the
purest

purest patriotism and love for his country in the anxiety which he shewed for the safety of the fleet? "Do not venture to relieve me, my fate is determined; do not decide the fate of our country by including yourselves in the disaster." But, indeed, the whole conduct of Lord Cornwallis was great and distinguished; while enterprize, activity, and expedition was wanted, no man had more of these qualities. At last, when prudence became necessary, he took a station which, in any former period of our history, would have been a perfect asylum. He planted himself in York and Gloucester, and preserved a communication with that which used to be the country and the dominion of Great-Britain; a communication with the sea. It used to be the country of an English commander, to which he could retire with safety, if not with fame. It used to be the country in which he was invincible, whatever might be his strength on shore. Here it was that Earl Cornwallis was stationed on the borders of Great-Britain, and by which he preserved a communication with New-York, nay, with the city and the port of London. But even this was denied him; for the ocean was no more the country of an Englishman, and the noble Lord was blocked up, though planted on the borders of the sea; nay, was reduced even to thank God, that a British fleet did not attempt his rescue. He said, he was far from meaning to insinuate that Admiral Graves was in fault; the ablest commander in the universe would have acted as he did, even Lord Hawke; the great and the gallant Lord Hawke, whose name he might now use with reverence, as he was no more (for it was not the fashion to venerate living authorities); and whose memory would ever be held dear, as the father of the British navy, would have acted in the same manner. He who lived during the splendour of the British navy, and who perhaps was happy to retire that he might not live in its decline; even he would have acted in the same manner. The hon. gentleman said he had taken a good deal of pains to inquire; he had conversed with the ablest officers on the subject; and he had it in his power to do so, (for all the ablest officers were on shore) and they declared unanimously, that it would have been madness in Admiral Graves to have ventured to attack the French fleet in their position in the Chesapeake; that it could not have been done without the utmost risk of losing the whole fleet, as well as the army that was on board. How different was this from what it used to be in the English navy. In former wars to meet an enemy and to fight, to command a squadron and to vanquish, was the same thing. A British admiral knew not what it was to retreat from a French squadron, or be apprehensive of engaging them. But this, among other things, the Earl of Sandwich had introduced into
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the service of Great-Britain. He had made it an essential part of the duty of an English Admiral to run away from an enemy. He, the Admiralty, who had declared in his place, in the House of Peers, that he deserved to lose his head if he ever failed to have a fleet equal to the combined naval power of France and Spain. He had forfeited the penalty of his bond; the Earl of Sandwich had forfeited his head, for the Earl of Sandwich had not a fleet in any quarter of the world equal to that of the House of Bourbon. In America, the British squadron, under Admiral Graves, amounted to twenty-five sail of the line. The French squadron, under De Grasse, to thirty five sail; in America then we were unequal. In the West-Indies a decided superiority against us had been manifested by the occurrences of the campaign. We had lost the island of Tobago; a large Spanish squadron was now triumphant in those seas, unopposed by any British force whatsoever, capable and ready to do what they pleased. True; we had taken a defenceless island, and disgraced ourselves by the capture; a capture productive of no good (no national good he meant, for undoubtedly the conquerors would have benefited by the plunder) and by which we had brought upon our name and arms the greatest stigma that could fall upon an enlightened nation, that of barbarity.

In the West-Indies then we were inferior, and so inferior that there was not a man of any experience or of knowledge who did not tremble for the safety of our dearest possessions in those seas. Unequal in those two places, it might be thought that our great superiority was employed in some exploit in another part of the world. Where? how? was it in Europe? in Europe, the Channel fleet did not at any time consist of more than 27 ships of the line, and the combined fleets amounted to 47 sail, and blocked up the mouth of the English Channel; claimed the proud dominion of the seas on our coasts, and took within our view a valuable and a numerous fleet of traders. In the English Channel, then, we were inferior. But perhaps in the Northern seas there was a great commanding squadron to overcome or to destroy the Dutch marine. Was there so? Admiral Parker met and fought the enemy with an inferior force, and there was a circumstance occurred in this part of our naval management which gave a most striking picture of the Admiralty system. After Admiral Parker had written home to inform the Board that the Dutch squadron was much larger than they had given him to understand or expect, they dispatched a cutter to him with the intimation that there were two ships lying at Harwich, fully equipped and ready for sea at an hour's notice,

notice, which he might have if he desired them. Instead of sending these ships, in consequence of the information which the Admiral had given them, they sent a cutter, and lost the opportunity. Admiral Parker met the Dutch fleet in the mean time, and fought without the addition of these ships, by which, perhaps, and indeed in all probability, he would have procured a decisive victory, and have destroyed or maimed the Dutch force for the rest of the war. But by this ignorant, treasonable conduct, instead of a victory, there was only a drawn battle. But perhaps we had been superior in the Mediterranean, and in the Baltic. No; in the Mediterranean we durst not even attempt to relieve an invested island; the island of Minorca;—nor relieve a blockaded garrison; the garrison of Gibraltar, two places that were always hitherto considered to be of the last importance. — In the Baltic, we had given up the right of fighting, even when attacked; we must not dare to fire a gun in the Baltic. In the European seas, then, we had been unequal to the enemy in all the operations of the campaign. In the East-Indies we were not superior to the enemy. He had heard in the King's speech, of the prosperous state of affairs in the East, but he professed he knew of no prosperity in that quarter.—Was there any news of conquest, or of advantage, or even of escape, come from the East? It was a hidden secret to every body with whom he conversed; and he believed, was to be found no where but in the King's speech. In every corner of the world thus are we inferior to the enemy; and yet, with a fleet diminished and inferior, rendered still more weak by the infamous manner in which it is directed.—After the present disaster to our arms in Virginia, with the same men to conduct, and what is worse, with the same system, are we, the representatives of the people of Great-Britain, called upon to address the Crown, and promise to support his Majesty in the same pursuit that hath brought us to this state.

In giving this detail of our situation, he had avoided entering into the minute and subordinate measures of government. He had confined himself merely to the leading features of this management, and of our situation; and though he had not enumerated our domestic grievances, he by no means forgot or despised them. There was one grand domestic evil, from which all our other evils, foreign and domestic, had sprung. The influence of the Crown. To the influence of the Crown we must attribute the loss of the army in Virginia; to the influence of the Crown we must attribute the loss of the thirteen provinces of America; for it was the influence

of the Crown in the two Houses of Parliament, that enabled his Majesty's Ministers to persevere against the voice of reason, the voice of truth, the voice of the people. This was the grand parent spring from which all our misfortunes flowed. But still, as he had said before, this picture of our situation was more distant from dejection than the serious picture of the honourable gentleman who spoke before him; for all these calamities were connected with the system, and the men in power. Change the one *in toto*, and remove the other, and you would purify the fountain-head, by which all the flood was contaminated.

He called upon the House to know whether they were still ready to go on with this accursed and abominable war. He called upon them as the representatives of the people, and not as the creatures of the Minister, to do their duty; to execute the trust reposed in them, and to act up to the sentiments that they really felt. Did they really believe that we could ever conquer America? He desired them to lay their hands upon their hearts, and proclaim in the presence of God and men, whether they thought that all the power of Britain, strained and exerted, was equal to the task. He would leave the question to this conscientious test, and he would venture to say, that if no man, but he who thought the contrary of this, would presume that night to vote for the Address, the Minister would be left in the smallest minority that was ever known in that House; nay, he believed in his soul, that the Minister himself would vote against the war. Were they determined rashly and vehemently to go on? Had they not done enough for the Minister, and was it not now sufficient time to do something for their constituents? In his own opinion, no address whatsoever should be sent up to the throne, until they had an opportunity of going down to their constituents, and consulting with them on the matter. They, and they only, were to pay for the continuance of the war, and it was fit and necessary that they should give their instructions: But though this was his own immediate opinion, he was willing to take a more gentle course, for he desired unanimity as much as the honourable gentleman who spoke before him; and therefore he would move to amend the motion for the Address, by the substitution of a clause, in the room of a great part of that now in the hand of the Speaker. The violent epithets and abuse against the French, though he did not approve of them, were yet become so familiar to the House, and the Ministry were become so much in love with them, perhaps using them to conceal their good offices in a more substantial way, that he did not very earnestly object to them. The part to which he could not

agree was all that which went to the continuance of the American war, and which was couched in the most cunning and insidious language. The amendment which he should propose would give his Majesty the assurance of their loyalty and zeal, and would promise in a more effectual way to support the essential rights and permanent interests of his empire. He concluded with moving, that after the first paragraph in the motion, concluding with the words, "diligent exertion to restore the public tranquillity," there should be inserted this sentence, in lieu of all the rest:

"And we will, without delay, apply ourselves with united hearts to propose and digest such counsels as may in this crisis excite the efforts, point the arms, and by a total change of system command the confidence of all his Majesty's subjects."

Mr. *Minchin* seconded the motion of amendment. It was absolutely necessary now to become serious; we had too long dealt in the language of flattery and falsehood. The Address now moved for was founded on the basis of flattery, and not of truth. It was calculated to deceive and mislead his Majesty into a belief that the people were favourable to the American war, and willing to support him in the continuance of it. They were no such thing. They abhorred the war, and whatever Ministers might say, nay, whatever their adherents, the Members of that House might say, the people would not go on from year to year, draining their blood and treasure in the prosecution of a war which they heartily condemned both in the principle and progress. For, says he, while we are going on with this dangerous and expensive war, without honour, and without advantage, we are increasing a sum, already above two hundred millions, by an addition of two-and-thirty for the expence of the current year. Where are we to stop? Are there no bounds; no moderation; no discretion in regard to expence? The Minister congratulates himself that our taxes, however numerous, are not burdensome; they are laid upon luxuries, and not upon necessities. But whatever is taxed in a commercial country must terminate with necessities. Misfortunes cannot teach; ruin cannot correct the obstinacy of Ministers; it deserves a harsher name than obstinacy. We have seen our fleets disgracefully running before the French fleet, or cooped within the chops of the Channel. He said, he had the highest opinion of the bravery of Admiral Darby, nor did he mean to throw the most trifling censure upon him. Indeed he believed that he acted as the greatest prudence directed, and in the only sure manner for the honour and welfare of that fleet which was under his command. It was

Mr.
Minchin.

not to him that we were to attribute the disgraceful mockery of the last campaign. With an inferior fleet, a fleet so very inferior to that of the enemies, he could only consult the safety of his country by avoiding an engagement. To that wretched system of Admiralty management, which had reduced the fleet to what it was, we must attribute the disgraces of the last campaign. The system which had driven so many brave and able officers from the service, and which had distracted and insulted those who remained; that system of which the Earl of Sandwich was the patron, and ought to be the victim. It was not enough that they should by mismanagement and injustice, by seeking only the increase of parliamentary influence in the promotions which were given, and the appointments that were made, by substituting in the room of fair and just œconomy, plans of unwise parsimony in the dock-yards, and driving by that means into the service of our enemies the ablest mechanics in the yards; and by the same plans introduced into the ships, driving also to foreign countries the most serviceable petty officers, who were best acquainted with the discipline and manœuvring of our fleets; by which we had taught the enemy our art of building as well as conducting our ships: it was not enough by these means to weaken, to reduce, and to distract the navy; but this little diminished and divided force must also want the benefit of wise, able, and vigilant direction; for though they lavished immense sums in secret service money, they yet procured no article of foreign intelligence; no circumstance of useful information. While Frenchmen were found hardy enough to dare death and infamy with all their concomitant terrors, we had no one to give us any account of any manœuvre of the enemy; of any project which might take place, or any scheme which was intended to be effected. Our war, as it was deficient of an end, was also wanting of a system. This circumstance was clearly and indubitably proved in the course of last summer, when the French and Spanish fleets appeared at the mouth of the Channel, without the Minister's knowing any thing of the matter. When it was published in one of the news-papers they denied the fact; their adherents were employed to contradict it, and though the paper persisted in its information, they continued obstinately ignorant: Nay, the Admiral commanding at Plymouth, sent tidings of the fact to Bristol, and sent the news for the safety of the trade, and that the merchants might have the means of preventing many captures; it was a most singular fact, that the naval Commander at Bristol, on the day that he received this intelligence from

from Plymouth, received also an express from the Admiralty, informing him that it was no such thing, and that their Lordships did not believe that the combined fleet were out of port. So much did they know of the transactions of our enemies and of the danger of the empire. The merchants of Bristol did as they ought; they believed the letter of Lord Shulldham, and paid no regard to the intelligence of the Admiralty; they kept their vessels in harbour and saved them from the jaws of the enemy. This was one glaring instance, out of many, of the extreme negligence, incapacity, ignorance, or treachery of the Admiralty. It fortunately happened for the deliverance of the country in this instance, that Providence interfered, and sent a tempest to drive the enemy from our coasts. Another instance had occurred in the course of the campaign equally glaring, and the issue more eventful. They sent Admiral Parker out to fight the Dutch with five ships, assuring him, that with that force he was much superior to the enemy, for they were so weak, unprovided, and incapable, that they could not send out a squadron equal to five ships of the line. After this another ship was sent to give him a great and decisive majority; another joined him by mere accident, the Berwick; and yet with all these, when the Dutch came out of the Texel, they proved to be much superior to him; and in an engagement fought with all the ancient valour of the two nations, they parted on equal terms. Admiral Parker wrote home that he found that they had been misinformed with respect to the force of the enemy, and retired from a situation in which he found it was vain to expect to do service to his country, though he might gain by his enterprize, immortal honour for himself. Such was the Administration of this naval Board, and such was the conduct of the men with whom we were still to intrust the most important part of the strength of Britain. To this it was impossible he could agree; and to this the Address, as proposed by the young gentleman on the opposite side of the way, absolutely went. He therefore seconded the amendment of his honourable friend. The able and comprehensive speech which he had made, had precluded him from saying many things that he had intended; and he should conclude, with a warm recommendation to the House, to adopt the amendment by which the system would be changed, and the nation be saved.

Lord *Mulgrave* said he had not intended to have spoken, if circumstances, which were manifestly false, had not been introduced in argument. He said the honourable gentleman who spoke last but one had asserted, that all the men of any naval

Lord
Mulgrave.

eminence were on shore and unemployed. [Mr. Fox said from the other side of the House, no, no; these were not his words. Lord Mulgrave exclaimed that they were his words, or his meaning was to that effect. All the above officers were on shore; that was the expression, and he would abide by it.] The contrary was the fact. In particular he could point out one Admiral who had carried the glory and honour of the British flag as far as it had ever been carried; though he was at this moment on shore, yet he was speedily to take again the command of the fleet in the West Indies. That Admiral would in future be ranked among the first naval characters of this country. To argue from a loose expression uttered some years ago by Lord Sandwich in the House of Lords, and to bring it into debate now, was neither candid nor Parliamentary. It was not possible for the House to know whether the words were correctly quoted or not, and therefore they had with that propriety and wisdom, by which all their standing orders were framed and regulated, determined that no member should bring up in debate the words of any gentleman on a former day, much less bring up words spoken in another place. He averred that the noble Lord at the head of the naval department was not criminal in his conduct. He had acted throughout the whole of his administration with a real assiduity and vigour. He asserted that our navy was so far from being inferior in strength to the situation in which the noble Lord found it, that it was far superior to its boasted state in 1759; for, at this time we employed no less than 118,000 seamen and marines on board the royal navy, a greater number than ever was employed at any former period of our history. He insisted that the noble Lord was not by any means to blame, for not being able to make greater exertions, or producing more success; the fault lay not with him; it was not in the nature of our situation, fighting combined powers, who dragged us to every quarter they pleased, having, from their superiority in numbers, the power of choosing in what quarter of the globe they should wage the war; but it was by the accumulation and strength of our enemies that we were inferior. The first fleet that Lord Sandwich had sent into the European seas, he averred, was superior to the enemy. The administration of the Admiralty Board, that had preceded that of the noble Lord, had been too parsimonious; and the effects of their parsimony were felt to this day; that parsimony was, in a great measure, the cause why our exertions were no greater by sea, as it operated upon the number of our ships. It had increased much under the direction of the noble Lord at the head

head of the department; and that too in contradiction to those very men who now censure his conduct, and who desired the navy not to be increased from œconomic motives. The parsimony of that noble Lord whom he had praised so much, and the system then pursued with the concurrence of the opposition, the system of Lord Hawke, had crippled the British navy; and it was a well known, notorious and disgraceful fact, that at the time of the contest about the Falkland Islands, we had not a fleet to send to sea. It was very true that the difference with America had deprived us of a considerable supply of naval stores, as well as of mariners; but even with this disadvantage, such had been the exertions of the noble Lord, that the magazines were now plentifully stored. If the honourable gentleman chose to turn his great historical knowledge to the other side of the question, he knew that he could prove to the satisfaction of the House that we are not, nor ever were, equal to France in a naval contest, where France applied all her sources and strength to the raising of a navy. He asserted, that in the reign of king William, France was superior to us and Holland. In the reign of queen Anne it was likewise superior. To call this a disgraceful war was ungrateful and ungenerous. It was calamitous, but not disgraceful. It was a war in which the honour and spirit of the nation had been carried as high as at any period of our history. It was not unlike that mode of prophesying, which, though it had always the good fortune of proving false, yet had tended to add courage to our enemies: Facts which only wanted time to disprove themselves. Such as what we have frequently heard in these walls: the Germans will all desert, the English sailors will not fight against the Americans: How true these prophecies where time had evinced. With respect to the fact mentioned by the honourable gentleman of the cutter that was dispatched to Admiral Parker, it was not correctly nor candidly stated. When Admiral Parker wrote home that he suspected the Dutch force to be greater than the Admiralty had apprehended, a cutter was sent to inform him, that one ship, the Berwick, then in the North seas, had orders to join him, which she accordingly did, and that there was another line of battle ship laying at Harwich, which he might have if he liked. Was there any thing absurd, or negligent, or treacherous in this? Would the honourable gentleman have had the Admiralty to send the ship without knowing whether she was wanted or not? He had thought proper to say thus much to defend the first Lord of the Admiralty against the aspersions which had been thrown on him unjustly by the two honourable gentlemen

gentleman who had spoken before him. It was his sincere opinion, that the noble Lord was as honest a man and as able a naval Minister as ever filled that department.

Ad. Keppel. *Admiral Keppel* spoke a few words in answer to the noble Lord. He reprehended him for the vehement manner in which he had seized on a hasty expression of Mr. Fox, and thundered it out as an unjust aspersions on many brave and gallant officers now fighting the battles of their country, and whom it would be base and disgraceful in any man to revile. There were officers in the service every way deserving the appointments which they held, and he knew the honourable gentleman to be incapable of insulting them; but the noble Lord had ungenerously, and in his opinion uncandidly, taken up an expression delivered in a parenthesis, and to which, he sincerely believed, no gentleman in the House applied the meaning given to it by the noble Lord but himself. The noble Lord had said, that the first fleet which Lord Sandwich sent into the European seas to fight the French was superior to the enemy; he denied the fact; it was not true. It had been before this time advanced, and before this contradicted. At the time of his court-martial, he called upon the Admiralty Board to produce the official list of the strength of the French fleet, which they refused to do; do it yet; produce that list, says the honourable Admiral with some warmth, and do not come here hazzarding assertions, which, when called upon, you will not avow, and dare not, because you cannot prove! The noble Lord had said, that the parsimony of Admiral Lord Hawke was the cause of our present weakness. He denied that also. Lord Hawke was truly, as Mr. Fox had said, the father of the British navy, and he had left the English fleet in a flourishing condition; flourishing for a time of peace; which if the present First Lord of the Admiralty had done his duty, and faithfully and diligently applied the immense grants of Parliament to the increase of our navy, or had even ably directed, employed, and applied the naval force which he really possessed, the misfortunes of this war would never have occurred. The last was the severe charge which he had to bring against the noble Lord; the misapplication of the force with which he was intrusted; and, if the house would call for the papers which he would point out, he pledged himself to prove to their conviction, what he averred upon his knowledge to be true.

Lord Mulgrave. *Lord Mulgrave* rose again, and maintained what he had said before, that Mr. Fox's expression was, "for all the able officers are on shore." These were the terms, and he had no way of collecting his meaning but from his words.

Mr.

Mr. Thomas Pitt said, that if the honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had made use of unparliamentary language, in speaking of what a noble Lord had said in the other House, he was sure he did not mean to infringe upon the orders of that House; but from the conviction, that whatever or wherever a gentleman speaks, it ought to be truth; and he must say, that it looked suspicious in rejecting to be tried by his own assertions. What! was it honourable to take refuge in a parliamentary order against so serious a charge as the degradation, if not the ruin of the British navy, and with it the ruin of the British empire? was this honourable, or did it look like conscious innocence and manly fortitude? The noble Lord persisted in misrepresenting the honourable gentleman against the sense and candour of the House. The honourable gentleman had clearly and evidently said no more than, that many great, gallant, and experienced officers were on shore; driven from the service by the system of the Admiralty. Was it not the fact? But did this include a charge against these officers who were employed? By no means.

The honourable gentleman condemned the whole plan and conduct of Administration. They were engaged in a disgraceful pursuit, for they seemed to be actuated by the worst of motives. He said, that gentlemen ought not, for the trifling ambition of momentary greatness, the petty and insignificant baubles of fortune or situation, to press measures which must make them odious to posterity. In the page of the historian the laudably ambitious should expect his character. Ambition was a public and a generous virtue: it studied and pursued the exaltation of its country; but theirs was not ambition: it was a passion of a nature too base to be mentioned in that House. He conjured gentlemen to consider the diminution of national honour. He conjured them by their private interest, which must come diminished to their families. The motion for the Address shewed, however, the torpidity of mind, which he feared did not promise to procure this consummation so devoutly to be wished. The *lacrymæ rerum* did not touch them. He applied himself to the country gentlemen: but he declared, he looked upon it that there was no public, no Parliament, or we could not go on without bringing to account those who have brought this country to its present disgraceful situation.

He had no wish for a change of ministry: it was equal to him who were in that situation. He neither desired or would accept of trust. No matter what set of puppets worked the dismal scene! Whether one low little set of men on that side of the House, or another low little set on this, while the system remained,

remained, and the secret poisoning influence which it had begun with, and continued through the whole of the present reign. He declared to God, he hoped that the present Ministry might continue in their situation until they brought the affairs of this nation to that crisis which might be accompanied with the suitable reward, either of punishment or glory. For his part, he approved of the amendment; but he would nevertheless, should that amendment be carried, vote against the Address, as he thought it at once superfluous and improper to vote any Address. His Majesty has sent us his thoughts, and the House is to consider of these thoughts. He declared for one, that he would not consent to give one shilling of supply to support the present war; a war to which the country gentlemen had unfortunately given too much countenance. He requested the country gentlemen, therefore, to consider what could be done to retrieve the nation from its very calamitous situation. He was sure he was parliamentary in his conduct, for as a member of that House, he had the care of the public purse, and it was as much the province of a member of that House to take care of it as it was a prerogative of the Sovereign to declare war and proclaim peace.

In reply to what the noble Lord had said, that it was a war more calamitous than disgraceful, he said, that in his opinion, it was both the one and the other; disgraceful in its principle, and calamitous in its progress. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had said, that we ought to go down to the people of England, and receive their instructions, before we pledged ourselves to the continuance of the war. This was exactly his opinion, and what he begged leave to recommend. In a fortnight they might do this, and it was his sincere advice to withhold all supply till that was done.

Ld. North. Lord *North* now arose, and in a short speech contended that the Address, in its original shape, without the amendment, ought to meet the unanimous concurrence of that House. He adverted to what had fallen from Mr. Fox, that he believed his Majesty's ministers received the pay of France. [Mr. Fox said across the House, that he did not say he believed, but that they could not act more for the interest of France if they did receive salaries from that kingdom.] The honourable gentleman, says the noble Lord, it seems, did not say he believed it; I give him credit; I am convinced he did not believe it, nor any man in the House, nor in the kingdom, could believe that his Majesty's ministers received the pay of France. He would not follow the honourable gentleman through his very long enumeration of misfortunes, arising,

fiag, as he had said, from misconduct, incapacity, or treachery. Whatever might be their abilities, he was convinced that his Majesty's ministers were zealous in the service of their country; and if they had been wrong, it was an error of judgement, and not of the heart. They had prosecuted the American war, not with the infamous design stated by the honourable gentleman, of aggrandizing the Crown at the expence of the constitution, and making the subjects slaves that the king might be despotic. This was not the purpose of ministers, nor was it the wish of his Majesty. If they had entertained this design; if they had desired to give the Crown an increase of power by American connection, they had thrown away and rejected the opportunity. The Americans had no objection to submit to the authority of the Crown; they offered, and desired that they should remain obedient and loyal to the Crown; but they objected to all dependence on the Parliament. They would suffer the King to reign in America without the interference of the legislature. It was to the claims of the Parliament, and not to those of the sovereign, that they were adverse. It was therefore highly unjust and injurious to say of ministers that they had instituted and persevered in this war for the purpose of adding influence to the Crown: it was for the sake of the constitution; it was to preserve the supremacy of the Parliament of Britain; to preserve their just rights and privileges, that they had gone to war with the Colonies; and that they had maintained it amidst all the clamours and opposition that they had met with in that House. They had looked forward to the unity of the British constitution, and had forgone the offer of separating the King from his Parliament, and advancing one branch of the legislature to the dominion of America, independent of the other two. Was not this the fact? Did not men know that the Americans wished to be governed by the King and their own assemblies; and that they went to war because they would not be governed by the legislature of Britain? The argument therefore against the principle of the war was unfounded. The principle was just, and consistent with true policy, if it was true policy to preserve entire and unbroken that old and venerable constitution of government, composed of King, Lords, and Commons, for which our fathers had bled, and which Europe envied. This was the principle; the principle was right; and he would always justify it in the face of his King and his country.

But to come to the question.—It was objected to the Address, that it bound the House to the continuance of the American war. This was a mistake: the Address did not pledge the House to the continuance of the American war, or to any form, or shape, or size of it. The Address only declared to his Majesty, that they would support the measures which should be undertaken, or continued, for the preservation of the essential rights and permanent interests of the empire. There was no word of continuing the American war: it was not mentioned in the Address at all. Gentlemen were left at liberty to agree to or object to the future measures that should be proposed: all that they pledged themselves to was to act with vigour in supporting the essential rights and permanent interests of the empire. It was the opinion of his Majesty's ministers, and he trusted it would be the opinion of every man in the kingdom that we should, in the present moment of real and serious alarm, act with the energy which was necessary to our deliverance. We had been unfortunate, and a melancholy disaster had befallen our arms in Virginia; but must we lie down and die? Must we give up the conflict, because we had failed in this particular instance, or because we had failed in other instances?—No: it ought to rouse us into action; it ought to impel, and urge, and animate us: for by bold and united exertions, every thing might be saved; by dejection and despair, every thing must be lost. This was his opinion: it was the opinion of his Majesty's ministers; and they trusted that it would be the opinion of Parliament, and of the people. This was all that was declared in his Majesty's speech; that neither the temporary inconveniences of his subjects, nor his own strong desire for peace, should prevail upon his Majesty to abandon the essential rights and permanent interests of his kingdoms. Was the House ripe to give up those rights and interests?—He hoped not. Upon this ground it was then that his Majesty's ministers came down, and desired, and they did not think themselves audacious or impudent in desiring the concurrence and support of Parliament in prosecuting this true and just system of policy. It had been said, that it was a war of avarice, of ambition, of prerogative: he denied the fact; it was a war of constitution. The honourable gentleman had threatened him with impeachment and scaffolds; but that should not deter him from the preservation of the rights and legislative authority of Parliament. The question was, in respect to the war, whether they were inclined

clined to resign their rights as a Parliament, or with firmness address his Majesty with an offer of such vigorous aid as might, in the end, procure a peace consistent with the legislative powers over the Colonies. In respect to himself, he was ready at any time to stand an inquiry into his conduct: but whatever might be his fate, he would still persevere in supporting the right of Parliament. The war with America had been unfortunate, but not unjust. He had at all times thought so; and should he hereafter mount the scaffold for that part which he had borne in the administration, he should continue to think so: it was not a war of ambition; it was not a war of administration; it was a war founded in right, and dictated by necessity. With regard to the present Address, there were three modes proposed for consideration: the Address itself, which proposed to assist his Majesty in attaining his just rights; the amendment, which proposed a change of men and measures; and a sullen silence without any address. This last mode, he said, he decidedly disapproved, as neither being precedent or parliamentary. As to the two former, he had declared his opinion of the war; it would be to act in contradiction to that opinion not to vote for the Address, which proposed to support it.

Mr. *Burke* rose next, and with great warmth reprobated the language of the noble Lord. He averred, that it was impudent, it was audacious; it was something worse, it was insulting in his Majesty's ministers to look Parliament in the face, and talk such language as they had that moment heard from the mouth of the noble Lord in the blue ribbon. He said, if there could be a greater misfortune than those we had undergone in the disgraceful contest we were engaged in, it was hearing men rising up in the great assembly of the nation to vindicate such measures: it was the most alarming part of our condition; it was that which froze up his blood, and harrowed up his soul: for if they were not to be taught by experience; if neither calamities could make them feel, nor the voice of God make them wise, what had this poor, fallen, miserable, and undone country to hope for? He was an enemy to dejection, and he never would recommend or preach despair; but if any thing could tend to deject the people of England, to make them despair of their situation, and resign themselves to their fate, it was to hear their ministers come down, after what we had suffered, and impudently tell them that they were determined to go on with the American war. A battle might be lost, an

Mr. *Burke*.

enterprise might miscarry, an island might be captured, an army might be lost in the best of causes, and even under a system of vigour and foresight; because the battle, after all the wisdom and bravery of man, was in the hands of heaven; but if either, or if all, of these calamities had happened in a good cause, and under the auspices of a vigilant administration, a brave people would not despair: they would be animated by their injuries; they would collect energy from disappointment; and feeling and knowing that a great and a good ministry would be instigated, in such a case, to strike some bold, new, and decisive stroke, they would arm and resolve to second them; they would gather reinforcement from their hopes; and with a new soul they would proceed to the execution of whatever their ministry would project, and their leaders undertake. But it was not so in the present case. As his honourable friend had well described it, amidst all their sufferings and their misfortunes, they saw none so bad, none so distressing, as the weakness or the wickedness of their ministers. The noble Lord said the war was not disgraceful, it was only unfortunate: for his own part, he continued to call the war disgraceful, and not unfortunate; and he was warranted so to call it. Unfortunate was an epithet only to be annexed to occurrences wherein fortune only was concerned. The destruction of the Spanish armada, which was properly fitted out, was unfortunate; but surely the stroke against Lord Cornwallis could not be termed so. Fortune had nothing to do with it: there was no foresight, no plan laid down, and every man must from thence conjecture the event: and we were now to go on without plan and without foresight in this war of calamities; for every thing that happened in it was a calamity. He considered them all alike, victories and defeats; towns taken, and towns evacuated; new generals appointed, and old generals recalled: they were all alike calamities in his eyes; for they all spurred us on to this fatal business. Victories gave us hopes, defeats made us desperate, and both instigated us to go on; they were therefore both calamities: and the King's speech was the greatest calamity of all; for the King's speech shewed us the disposition of the ministers; and this disposition was not to retreat an inch; to go on, to plunge us deeper, to make us more disgraceful and more unhappy.

But the noble Lord says, the King's speech does not call upon us to go on with this war. What then, does not the noble

noble Lord know what the King's speech was? If he, says the honourable gentleman, as usual, ignorant of what he brought down in his pocket? Perhaps it was made and spoken without his advice: but as plainly as language could imply; for indeed it was not the way of his Majesty's ministers, to speak like other people; they had always a method of their own, a sort of hocus pocus style, which would translate either this way or that way, as might suit their immediate purposes; for the purpose of to-day was not with them the purpose of to-morrow: he said, as plain as ministerial language could speak, the King's speech and the address called upon and pledged the House to the continuance of the American war: but he would read the passage, and then see if any gentleman could doubt the fact: "And we receive, with the strongest emotions of duty and gratitude, your Majesty's gracious and endearing declaration, that you should not answer the trust committed to the sovereign of a free people, nor make a suitable return to your subjects for their constant, zealous, and affectionate attachment to your person, family, and government, if you consented to sacrifice, either to your own desire of peace, or to their temporary ease and relief, those essential rights and permanent interests, upon the maintenance and preservation of which the future strength and security of this country must ever principally depend."

"We declare, on our part, that we know no means of making to your Majesty any return so suitable and so just, and of answering the great trust committed to us by those whom we represent, as by giving your Majesty this firm assurance, that we are resolved to assist and support your Majesty, to the utmost of our power, in maintaining and preserving the essential rights and permanent interests of your crown and people."

What was this but a clear unequivocal declaration, upon the one side, to go on with the American war; and upon the other, a pledge to support it? This was immediately followed by a lamentation for the loss of the army in Virginia, and this by a harsh invective against our restless and invidious enemies. We are made to declare that their principal design was to foment and maintain the rebellion in North America;—and—and we are made to declare, that we will, to the utmost of our power, prevent them from doing this; for see—

"We are fully persuaded that the principal view of the confederacy of our enemies was to foment and maintain the rebellion

rebellion in North-America ; and, under the specious delusion of the establishment of an independent empire, to render your Majesty's colonies subservient to the power and influence of the crown of France ; but your Majesty may rely on our steady assistance to second your Majesty's endeavours to defeat the dangerous designs of our enemies, equally prejudicial to the real interests of America and to those of Great-Britain."

We are to give our steady assistance to second his Majesty's endeavours to defeat the dangerous designs of our enemies. What are the designs of our enemies ? to foment and maintain the rebellion in North-America. Was not the American war contained in every line of this ? But farther still ; we were to prevent the dangerous designs of our enemies for another reason, because the independence of America, to which these endeavours tended, " was equally prejudicial to the real interests of America and to those of Great-Britain." So that we were to go on with the war out of pure affection and friendship to America ; and to a certainty we were to go on with it. Did the House require any more evidence ? if they did, there was evidence at hand ; for if the Speech and Address had not spoken sufficiently clear, the noble Lord himself gives a full, clear, and decisive explanation of it ; For what does he say ? We went to war with America for the purpose of maintaining and preserving " the essential rights and permanent interests of this country." What, does his Majesty in the Speech say, and what does the House in the Address thank him for saying ? What but for the gracious and endearing declaration, that neither his own desires, nor the temporary inconveniencies of the people, should make him think of giving up a contest for the essential rights and permanent interests of this country. The noble Lord says, we went to war for the maintenance of rights ; the Speech says, we will go on for the maintenance of rights. It was but one story from the beginning to the end : it was, and had been for seven years, nothing but American war, American war, American war ; and it would be American war to the end of the chapter.

But he must speak a few words on the matter of these rights, which had cost us so much, and which was likely to cost us our all. Good God ! Mr. Speaker, exclaimed the honourable gentleman, are we yet to be told of the rights for which we went to war. Oh, excellent rights ! Oh, valuable rights ! valuable you should be, for we have paid
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dear at parting with you ! Oh, valuable rights ! that have cost Britain thirteen provinces, four islands, a hundred thousand men, and more than seventy millions of money ! Oh, wonderful rights ! that have lost to Great-Britain her empire on the ocean, her boasted, grand, and substantial superiority, which made the world bend before her ! Oh, inestimable rights ! that have taken from us our rank among nations, our importance abroad, and our happiness at home ; that have taken from us our trade, our manufactures, and our commerce ; that have reduced us from the most flourishing empire in the world to be one of the most compact, unenviable powers on the face of the globe ! Oh, wonderful rights ! that are likely to take from us all that yet remains ! What were these rights ? Could any man describe them ; could any man give them a body and a soul answerable to all these mighty costs ! We did all this because we had a right to do it : that was exactly the fact. “ And all this we dared do, because we dared.” We had a right to tax America, says the noble Lord ; and as we had a right, we must do it. We must risk every thing, we will forfeit every thing, we will think of no consequences, we will take no consideration into our view but our right, we will consult no ability, we will not measure our right with our power, but we will have our right, we will have our bond : America, give us our bond ; next your heart we will have it : the pound of flesh is ours, and we will have it. This was their language. Oh, miserable and insatuated men ! miserable and undone country ! not to know, that right signified nothing without might ; that the claim, without, the power of enforcing it, was nugatory and idle in the copyhold of rival states, or of immense bodies. Oh ! says a silly man, full of his prerogative of dominion over a few beasts of the field, there is excellent wool on the back of a wolf, and therefore he must be sheared. What ! shear a wolf ? yes. But will he comply ? have you considered the trouble ? how will you get this wool ? Oh, I have considered nothing, and I will consider nothing, but my right : a wolf is an animal that has wool ; all animals that have wool are to be shorn, and therefore I will shear the wolf. This was just the kind of reasoning urged by the noble Lord, and this the counsel given by him. The Americans have money ; we want it, we will have it. They resisted their claim ; they fought their battle for a time themselves, at last called in an ally ; they are joined by the French, and con-
joined

joined they have forced your armies to surrender ; and yet the noble Lord at this moment comes down and tells the Parliament of the nation that he has ruined, insolently tells them, that we are fighting for a right : he said insolently, for it was an insult upon the patience of the Parliament. But he begged pardon, he agreed with the honourable gentleman (Mr. T. Pitt), that there was no parliament, no people, or else such language, at such a day, would not be hazarded, much less suffered.

But this was like all the rest : it was only a fresh attempt to impose, to delude, and to draw on the people. He went into a recital of the various stories which they had told, and of the various doctrines and various plans which they had held and abandoned, and taken up again. But what had our war with America been, but a continual series of marching and countermarching, of taking and evacuating : indeed the different places in America seemed to undergo an excrementitious evacuation, analogous to that of the human body : and the noble Lord comes, says he, and recommends to us an Address, assisting, says he, to carry on this very useless if not very injurious war ; and this is to be in the language of clapping on the back, " who's afraid ?" and such other vulgar cant ; for, divesting it of its phraseology, what else is the echo of the royal speech, but those same vulgar expressions, couched in better terms ?

He was averse from deceiving and amusing the people with what he felt impracticable. He trusted a day of reckoning would come ; and whenever that day came, he should be able, by impeachment, to bring upon the heads of the authors of these unhappy affairs the punishment of them. The nation, as an animal, was dead ; but the vermin which fed on it had still an existence. He had looked cautiously at the conduct of Lord Cornwallis ; his gallantry he attested ; but what had his operations been, but marching and counter-marching from north to south, and from the mountains to the sea, and from the sea to the mountains. This had been to deceive the people here, and make them believe that we had a proportionate interest in the country to the extent of territory traversed ; and to confirm this, and to prove the certain subjugation of Virginia, Lord Dunmore was sent out to be governor. But the operations of the Americans were certain, though silent ; and though tardy, effective. Where real generalship was to be manifested, they had shewn it. Nor was this the only

instance of captured armies : Where was General Burgoyne's army ? *Redde nobis legiones.* Give us back our force, nor protract this burthensome, disgraceful, for it is not unfortunate, war, which, "like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along;" let us not hug in our bosom that snake, which will sting us even to the last agony of dissolution.

Lord *Nugent* spoke shortly on the point, that the Speech and Address did not pledge the House to the continuance of the American war. The honourable gentleman's oratory could do any thing; it was fascinating; it had the power of incantation; but it was not an easy thing to create something out of nothing. There was no ground in the Address for the honourable gentleman to go upon. The House were desired to pledge themselves to the support of the rights and interests of this country; and surely they would all do that. They were not to lie down and die, because they had met with a misfortune in Virginia. They were to be aroused by it; they were to snatch new courage from it, and be doubly armed and doubly active. If they must fall, let them in the name of God perish like Britons, "greatly falling with a falling state," if it was a falling state, but which he could not by any means allow. He was not for despondency: but as to the American war, he confessed he had his thoughts about it; he thought things grew worse and worse; and he was come to think, that it would be more advisable even to acknowledge their independency, than to go on playing the same losing game against them, by pursuing the war in the same way as we had done; nay, in fact, it would be policy to acknowledge their independence. But we would come to talk of the American war another day. The business now was to vote a suitable Answer to the King's Speech; and he declared in his conscience the one proposed was, he thought, very proper.

Colonel Barré rose next. He confessed that he came with the greatest coolness of temper to the House; but his feelings were so hurt at the Address, and the speech of the Minister, that it was with the greatest difficulty he could restrain his indignation. He took a retrospective view of our late losses and proceedings in the colonies and the West-Indies. In one year we had lost Dominica, the following year Grenada, the next St. Vincent, and now we had lost Tobago. Here he proved the defence was so small, in respect to soldiery, that there was only 41 men in the garrison, and there were found three cannon and four mortars to one man. He was sorry to differ from the honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) who

address conveyed that meaning. He did not know how they had discovered it to signify so much. Certainly it called upon us to pledge ourselves to support such measures as should be necessary to the maintenance of our essential rights and permanent interests, and so far as the American war went to that end, so far, but no farther, did they pledge themselves. It would afterwards become a question, whether the American war should be prosecuted or not? when a specific proposition to that effect was before the House, then would be the moment for gentlemen to declare their opinion; with respect to his own opinion, it was perhaps needless for him to say, that he had entertained hopes of a better fate to the gallant army under the earl Cornwallis. It was a most calamitous disaster, and what he should lament to the end of his life; but he was ready, for the share which he had in it as the American secretary, as his office was commonly called; to meet the strictest inquiry that gentlemen could wish to institute. The share which he had had in all the measures of the American war, he was ready to avow and to justify. He had acted from the purest and the most honest motives. If gentlemen imagined that he was enamoured of his situation, wedded to it, and lothe to leave it, they were mistaken, they had often heard his sentiments on this subject; he had never solicited the office; he had been called to it, and he was ready, without reluctance or regret, to quit it; at the same time, that he was not to be brow-beat nor clamoured out of it; when it should please his royal master it would please him.

The noble Lord said, he had never been so sanguine as to hope, or believe, that we could reduce America to obedience by force of arms. He never thought this. All that he had ever believed, and that he had ever wished for was, to support, and give efficacy to the struggles of the loyalists against the inimical. He had always understood that the loyalists were numerous, and that they wanted nothing but the assistance of the English arms to give them a decisive authority in the colonies. If he had been mistaken in his opinion; if he had been misled in his information, he could not help it. He had only to say, that if he was in error, it was an error in which he still remained, for he yet believed that we had many friends in the colonies, who would be happy of a reconciliation with this country, upon terms of dependance. He would never be the minister who should give up that dependance. He thought that this country depended upon its connection with America for its very existence. Take away

America, and we should sink into perfect insignificance; preserve it, and he would venture to say, it was yet the brightest jewel in the crown.

Mr. Dan
beny.

Mr. *Danlery* spoke with great heat for the farther continuance of the American war. It was a war founded in justice, and necessary to the honour as well as the interests of this country. In saying this, he knew that he spoke the sentiments of the city which he was called upon to represent. The citizens of Bristol were willing to sacrifice half their fortunes in the prosecution of it.

Lord Mait-
land.

Lord *Maitland* spoke forcibly against the Address and against the farther prosecution of the American war. He said that it was the most idle and ridiculous thing in the world to assert that the House were not pledged to the farther continuance of the American war. They certainly and clearly were so. He was astonished that ministers should persevere in what they saw was so much against the wishes and the inclinations of the people. Had they no apprehensions of the vengeance of a free, a great, and a suffering people? but, he was sorry to say, that that vigorous spirit which used to distinguish us as a nation, seemed now to be latent in our bosoms, if it was not altogether dead. There was an indifference about every thing which respected the nation, that made him tremble more than the foreign dangers which surrounded us. There was not a people in the world, except ourselves, who would not have been aroused by the calamity, and have plucked those men from the authority which they had abused. But we were wedded to misfortune. They had made disaster familiar to us. Were they not apprehensive of the future historian; if they were perfectly indifferent of their present figure, what would be said of them? What would even the most favourable and partial friend say of them in writing the history of the present time. They had a specimen of what they were to expect, in the writings of one of the greatest historians now living (Mr. Gibbon), who had praised them for the discovery of the little insignificant island of Otaheite, to cover the shame, or to conceal their loss of the continent of America. He adverted to what Mr Orde had said of the duty there was of the people appearing in suits of armour before the King. He said it would have a much better effect, and would sooner restore us to our native grandeur, if the people would appear in suits of armour before the ministry.

Mr. Rigby.

Mr. *Rigby* adverted to what had fallen from Mr. Fox, relating to an assertion which had dropt from him at a former

mer period of time. It was very true he had said, that if the conquest of Charles-town did not operate decisively in our favour, he had determined to go no farther, for one, in its prosecution. It was his sincere honest sentiment, that it would be madness to persevere in the war, against the evidence of positive and avowed disaffection. If he saw that it produced no effect upon the minds of the people in that country, that they remained fully inimical to Great Britain, rejecting her proffered friendship, that then he should abandon all hopes of reducing America by force. He had said this then; he said it now. But whatever might be his opinion, with regard to the farther prosecution of the American war, the present was not the time when he was called upon to deliver it, or to shew it by his vote. The question of the American war was not before the House. It was only proposed to them, to agree to an address to the Throne, promising to support his Majesty in his endeavours to maintain and preserve the essential rights and permanent interests of this country. Could there possibly be a second question about that? Could the House hesitate a moment in agreeing with the honourable gentleman, who moved for such an address, at such a moment? It met with his sincere concurrence; and he gave his vote for it as heartily and as freely as he ever did upon any occasion. He could not help taking notice of what had fallen from several gentleman, of their desiring to take counsel from their constituents at this crisis. What! was not the sense of the nation to be collected in that House? such applications to the people were unconstitutional, if not illegal; they led to disaster, public tumult, and outrage. He was always against them; first, because they were unnecessary; for the the great constituent body of the people, having delegated their voice to their representatives, their representatives only could pronounce it; and he was against it also, because it was dangerous, for it tended to disturb the peaceable government of the country.

General Conway spoke with great energy against the farther prosecution of this unnatural war. The arguments that had been advanced on the one side of the House, only went to prove, that his Majesty's ministers had not dared to do that openly, which yet they wished to do; they had not dared to call the House to support them specifically in continuing the American war; but they had done it as effectually by the address which was proposed, as if it had been absolutely and expressly mentioned. The honourable gentleman (*Mr. Burke*)

General Conway.

Burke) had made it manifest; it did mean, and it could mean nothing else; and must he, in this most awful manner, pledge himself to the farther prosecution of that, from which all our evils had sprung? must he go up to his royal master, and give him assurance that he would support him with his life and fortune, in that which he was convinced would bring ruin upon his country. He should be a traitor to his king and country if he was to act in this manner.

Mr. Sheridan.

Mr. *Sheridan* attacked Mr. *Rigby* for the contemptuous manner in which he had spoken, and always did speak, of the constituent body of the country. He defended the honourable member's ideas on the subject, and argued very forcibly on Mr. *Rigby's* declaration, that the House were in possession of all the sense of the country. Mr. *Sheridan* then adverted to the arguments that had been urged to claim the confidence and support of the House at this juncture, which, he said, all went to prove, that ministers were entitled to the support of the country, in proportion as they shewed themselves unfit to govern it. He was particularly happy in his manner of handling what Lord George Germaine asserted, that he still continued to regard America as the brightest jewel of the crown.

Mr. Rigby.

Mr. *Rigby* rose to explain, and said, he would not have it go forth, at a time there was so full a gallery, that he had spoken so contemptuously of the rights of the people; he had objected only to the difficulty of gathering their sentiments in a peaceable manner.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. *Fox* then rose, (and after some debate on the point of order, respecting the right of reply, claimed by those who had made a motion) and, in another most masterly speech, replied to the arguments which had been advanced on the other side of the House against the amendment which he had proposed, and which had been so ably supported by arguments of the most forcible kind; and so weakly opposed by fallacious and puerile quibbles. All the argument, if it deserved the name, or rather all the wrangling, was for the purpose of maintaining that the address did not pledge the House to the continuance and support of the American war. So contemptible an evasion little deserved the reception with which it had met, but his honourable friend had completely overturned it; for if our language spoke plainer, or our terms were more explicit, he would refer to the cool determination of every man, who was not a minister, in the House. He referred to the harsh and exulting manner in which Lord

Mulgrave

Mulgrave took up and twisted an expression of his; and he answered, one by one, every argument that had been advanced.

Then the House divided on the amendment; Ayes, 129; noes, 218. — The original Address was then agreed to, and a Committee appointed to draw it up.

November 28.

Mr. *Perceval* reported from the Committee, appointed the day before, to draw up an address to be presented to his Majesty, that the committee had drawn up an address accordingly, which they had directed him to report to the House. He therefore moved for leave to bring it up.

Sir William Wake objected to the report being brought up, and begged to be indulged with a minute or two. He said, That in the debate of yesterday, unanimity of sentiment, and a total junction of persons, were said to be the only means to bring this country out of that wretched situation in which she was at present involved. Union was certainly an object not to be attained by the present address; for, as it stated things that were not, men, instead of union, must rather wish to oppose a war which created such an expence of blood and treasure; but, besides, every rational man would naturally inquire how we should be able to support so enormous a charge? The minister had informed the House, that there would still be resources in the nation sufficient to support the war; if his Lordship meant that there was money in the country, his assertion was undoubtedly just; but still he would not agree with him that there were still resources, because the war had exhausted them, as might be clearly ascertained by the great falling off in the value of land. If the noble Lord in the blue ribbon would go down to his estate in the country, and ask his tenants if there were resources, he was confident they would answer him in the negative; that our resources were exhausted, appeared also from the reduced price of wool, which had fallen in the proportion of from 22 and 20 shillings to 10. He therefore advised the noble Lord not to suffer himself to be deluded by the vain hopes of finding supplies for feeding a war, which had already swallowed up almost all the resources of the country.

Sir Philip Jennings Clarke spoke to an assertion of the minister on the day before, and also in the Address, that “the war was a just and necessary war, to maintain the essential rights

Sir William Wake.

Sir P. J. Clarke.

rights of the empire." This he denied; it was no such thing; and we could not with any truth aver, that we went to war with America for the maintenance of any just rights; for Americans presented a petition, by the hands of Mr. Penn, offering to agree to any fair, decent, and honourable terms. He could not, therefore, consent to a positive falsehood, and be an accomplice in saying that the war was either just or honourable; and he could not therefore agree to the address. In that petition, Congress, he well remembered, expressly declared themselves ready and willing to accede to any terms consistent with their own freedom, and calculated to preserve the honour of the mother country. What could be more decent, what more dutiful! But that petition was rejected; Mr. Penn was refused to be heard, and thence the spring of all our calamities; whoever therefore suggested that measure was responsible for all the mischiefs that had ensued, and ought to answer for them. The minister had called for union; how was it possible that they who had always reprobated the American war, could now be brought to agree to its continuance? It was impossible.

Mr. Duncombe.

Mr. *Duncombe* took notice of an observation of Mr. Fox, the day before, that "by the amendment which he proposed, members would have an opportunity of consulting their constituents before they pledged themselves to the continuance of the war." This, he said, he very much desired to do; as, by that means he should have an opportunity of discharging his duty, and acting agreeable to the wishes of that most respectable and numerous body of freeholders whom he was delegated to represent. Indeed he partly knew their sentiments. He knew that they abhorred the American war; he was therefore at no loss to act upon that subject. With regard to the resources talked of so frequently by the noble Lord in the blue ribbon, if he meant the few guineas in gentlemen's pockets, there might be found some little money; but with regard to the people in general, the case was widely different, the fact standing exactly as the honourable Baronet who spoke last but one had stated it. He said the American war was generally odious, and he was persuaded, however, gentlemen within doors might be pleased to argue, there was not a man, if he was to ask him his real sentiments without those walls, who would not acknowledge that the American war had nearly exhausted the blood and treasure of this country, and was big with ruin.

Mr William Pitt.

Mr. *William Pitt* spoke next. He rose he said to give vent to those sentiments of indignation which, in the present

sent disastrous situation of our affairs, he found it impossible for him to suppress, they rendered his situation too distressing to be borne in silence; the duty he owed to his sovereign and to his own country would not permit him to remain in silence when he saw ministers running headlong into measures which could end only in the ruin of the state: he wished to shew his attachment to his sovereign and his family, by holding to him a language which would shew him that he had been deceived by those to whom he looked for advice; he wished to discharge his duty to his country, by endeavouring to prevent Parliament from precipitately voting an address which pledged the House in the most direct manner to prosecute the American war, and support the continuance of that fatal system which had led this country step by step to the most calamitous and disgraceful situation that ever a once flourishing and glorious empire could possibly be driven to! a situation that threatened the final dissolution of the empire, if not prevented by timely, wise, and vigorous efforts. He implored them to pause a moment, and consider what they were doing. The Address then at the bar was couched in terms the most hypocritical and delusive, and if suffered in a crisis so alarming and melancholy to be published to the world as the real sentiments of the House of Commons, it would be an additional misfortune, greater than any that had yet preceded it. It would at once deceive the King, prostitute the judgment of Parliament, and degrade its dignity, insult the people, and superinduce consequences fatal to the very being and existence of the empire. It was an honest and a faithful line of conduct in them to warn both the sovereign and people of the dangers that were common to both. It was not the base and deceitful language of adulation which Parliament should adopt; but that stile and that manner which became a body of men equally attached to their sovereign and their constituents. He was unable to account for the confidence of ministers, in proposing an address which pledged Parliament to measures without vouchsafing to give that Parliament any sketch or outline of those plans and measures which the House were called upon to sanctify; in the better days of Parliament such conduct would have been treated with the indignation which it deserved. They pretended to argue that the Address did not pledge the House to the war with America. — It was puerile to say so. He was desirous to force ministers to break through

the supercilious silence in which those plans were veiled ; or to silence the empty loquacity with which they endeavoured to argue men out of their senses. He asked, if there was a man in the House, who, after the late disaster which had befallen this country, could trust the administration of affairs in the hands of the present ministers ? Gentlemen would recollect the supplies that had been voted ; the means that had been devised and adopted ; the powers that had been entrusted to them ; and the use that they had made of them ; that use was loudly proclaimed by the captivity of Lord Cornwallis and his army. Were gentlemen then disposed to trust still the management of a war to the care of men who had already made so bad a use of the confidence of Parliament ? Was the American war to have no end ? And were the ministers, who, by all their measures, had only convinced the nation of the absurdity of carrying it on, to come to that House, and to propose an address which tied them down to prosecute the war, of the impropriety, absurdity, injustice, and ruinous tendency of which every man in the House was convinced ? What could make the American war an object so steadfastly to be adhered to ? Was there any national object in the pursuit ? Certainly there was none. The real truth was, it was an appendage to the First Lord of the Treasury too dear to be parted with ! it was the grand pillar, built on the ruins of the constitution, by which he held his situation ; the great means of extending that baleful influence of the Crown on which alone he placed all his security ! But how could they expect that Parliament would repose confidence in them, when they themselves had no bond of union between them ? In his soul, he was satisfied, that if he was to go from one end of the Treasury bench to the other, and ask every man who sat on it, if he could trust his neighbour ? they would all answer in the negative : and yet they expected that confidence from Parliament which they had not in one another.

Ever since he had left the House he spent his time in asking himself what arguments had been given strong enough to persuade the House to go on with this war. One of its avowed supporters, the noble Lord in the blue ribbon, speaking of the American war had declared, that he ever had considered it, and still did consider it, as a war just and necessary, founded on the claim of a right that was undisputed. With regard to the grammatical or logical correctness of this reason,

reason, he would not institute an inquiry, nor would he now enter into an argument upon the justice of the war; that point having been sufficiently discussed, for mankind to have made up their minds upon it. What the noble Lord meant by necessity, if he meant any thing short of a physical necessity, he was at a loss to imagine. That an end could not be put to the war, if Parliament resolved on such a measure, was too absurd an idea to be maintained. The war had been proved by fatal experience to be fruitless, and every day that we persisted in it clearly tended rather to create new difficulties than smooth the path to peace and friendship. That the war was originally just and necessary was, however, the only argument of one noble Lord; let the House recollect what had fallen from another noble Lord, whose situation rendered all that he said upon the subject peculiarly the object of attention. That noble Lord had held a very different language. Without laying claim to that boldness of pride and ambition, which alone could generate the hope of making America the victim of conquest, he had said, all his hope rested on the more mild, lenient, and moderate expectation of the practicability of sending a sufficient force into the country, to enable the numerous friends of Great-Britain to get the better of the party that opposed them, and had possessed themselves of power. The noble Lord had told them, that he never imagined America could be recovered by arms, but that the loyalists, who were much superior to the hostile, would be able, with their assistance, to effect all that could be wished for. In order to see the wisdom of this conceit, Mr. Pitt advised the House to look back to the events of the war, and especially to those of the last campaign, which were too recent, and of which every man's breast was too full to render it necessary for him to undergo the anguish of describing them. Above all, he begged the House, if they wanted farther proof of the power of protection which Great-Britain was warranted to hold out, let them look at the articles of the capitulation of Lord Cornwallis, and let them cast their eye on the answer to the tenth article. They would there see, that all the friends of Great-Britain, all the loyalists, who had been treacherously deluded to join Lord Cornwallis, and deceived by false hopes and ill-founded promises, so far from being protected, were left to the civil justice of the country. What the civil justice of America was, it was utterly impossible for him to say, but if

the same treacherous system that had long disgraced Great-Britain was suffered to be persevered in after what had happened, perhaps the civil justice of this country would soon overtake some men, who were undoubtedly much more proper objects of its operation than those unfortunate wretches, who, looking up to the British standard with that reverence and opinion of its influence which in better times it was wont to create, had foolishly sacrificed their lives and fortunes to the empty promises of an abandoned administration. He asked, where, under the dreadful pressure of national calamity, was a monarch of a free people to take refuge, and find resource, but in the honest, undisguised, and loyal councils of his subjects? Would fallacy administer comfort to the wounded mind? Would fraud support a falling state? He concluded by protesting, that nothing but his duty to his sovereign and his country had actuated him to call upon ministers to give some information to the House. He had spoken from no private, personal motives; his feelings and his views were public: he wished for information on the two points he had particularly mentioned;—their intention with regard to the farther prosecution of the American war, and some outline of the manner in which they intended to pursue it. On these two heads he called for and expected some information.

*Id Adv. for
Scotland.*

The *Lord Advocate for Scotland* said, after many high compliments to the honourable gentleman, that though no minister, and consequently unable to give the honourable member the information he required, he thought himself bound to give the House the reasons which had induced him to give his vote to the Address, which the honourable member (Mr. Orde) held in his hand, at the bar. He would tell the House fairly that before he came to town he expected to hear of the misfortune which had happened, and this from a firm idea that it was but too probable: it did happen; and he had read the Address several times, and with a jealous eye, to discover whether there was a word in it, by which he should be pledged to concur in the prosecution of the American war; but he had not discovered a syllable in it that had any such tendency; and therefore he had not felt any difficulty in giving his vote for the Address. He thought it would have been improper for him to pledge himself for the prosecution of the war in America; but he felt that it would have been equally improper for him not to have used a manly and firm language in the Address, by which all Europe might

might be convinced that no disaster, however great (and no one believed the late misfortune to be greater than he did) could depress the spirit or sink the courage of the nation. The language of the Address was spirited; but in his opinion it was so far from pledging Parliament to the American war, that whenever the expediency of continuing that war should become a question in that House, every gentleman who had voted for the Address, would be as free to vote for putting an end to the war as if no such address had ever been proposed. This was his opinion; and the two noble Lords in office, who sat near him, said, in the last night's debate, that their sentiments, with respect to the Address, were exactly the same. Now it was singular indeed, that those who might be supposed to be most concerned in framing the Address, had publicly disavowed all intention of binding the House by the Address to pursue the American war; and yet the gentlemen on the other side of the House would force upon them a meaning which they disclaimed: those who framed the Address best knew the purport and meaning of the words; those who had voted for it knew upon what grounds they gave their vote: they all declared that they did not understand themselves to be pledged by it to prosecute the war in America; and yet the gentlemen who had voted against the Address pretended to know the meaning better than those who voted for it, and would thus force upon them a meaning which they utterly disavowed; this, he must needs say, was far from being candid: there must be some secret cause for this forced interpretation of words, of which their natural purport would not admit.

The term "American war" was often used on both sides of the House; but it was a term so indefinite, that unless gentlemen would be explicit he might mistake their meaning: the term might mean a war carried on over lakes and rivers, through woods and provinces, or, to say all in one word, a continental war in America. Was that the war which gentlemen wished to see determined? If it was, let them say so; and the matter be brought to a decision. There was another sort of war, which might consist in keeping some places in America, such as New-York, Halifax, and Charlestown, (if we now have those places); the preservation of those places by arms might be called an *American war*. Now, of these two sorts of American war some gentlemen might vote for one who would condemn the other. Would it be proper,

proper, therefore, without any previous deliberation, to reprobate the war in America, under the vague name of the *American war*? Surely no. It might perhaps be expedient, surrounded as we are by old, hereditary, natural, and powerful enemies, to confine our operations in America to a small compass, in order to turn our chief force against those enemies; that we might thereby regain our former respectable situation among the belligerent nations of Europe; and at the same time be ready to avail ourselves of every favourable occurrence in America to secure the trade and commerce of that country. Matters were now brought to a crisis; and ministers would be obliged, without delay, to make up their minds upon the plan of operations that they must pursue; there was not much time for deliberation; decided resolutions must soon be taken; *Deliberat Roma, perit Saguntum*: if they should go on much longer without taking some final resolve, the country might be undone. The necessity of a speedy resolution was so apparent, that if the deliberations should be very long the resolve might be made too late. He did not mean or wish to conceal his sentiments; he wished to speak clearly; though he did not mean to deliver, at that moment, any opinion on the measures that should be adopted, or the species of war which ought to be carried on in America: it was not, however, that he had not an opinion on the subject; he certainly had one; but he would wait for another opportunity to speak it. This much, however, he thought proper for the present, to speak the language of fortitude and manliness in the Address; for it ought not to be considered simply as an Address, but as a manifesto, calculated to let all Europe know that we were not depressed with a misfortune: the language of despondency would be extremely improper, whether our resolves should be for war or peace: if for war, it would be absurd; if for peace, it would serve to render our enemies more untractable and lofty in their terms; in either case, therefore, a bold, energetic, and spirited promise of assistance was the fittest for that House to adopt: but to say that to agree to a manly Address would be to pledge that House to prosecute the American war, was saying what the plain text of the Address, without a comment, would not justify.

Insinuations, he observed, were frequently thrown out against ministers; and sometimes it was said they supported measures which they did not approve, and which were diametrically

metrically opposite to their own principles. Such insinuations as these, he believed, were not unfeldom suggested merely for the service of the moment, and by gentlemen who disbelieved them even when they used them. It was a sacred maxim in the constitution, that "the King can do no wrong:" this maxim was necessary for the personal safety of the sovereign, and for the free deliberation of Parliament; but then this maxim implied, that, whatever was wrong in the administration of the state, was to be ascribed to the cabinet ministers of the monarch. This maxim secured to those ministers the confidence of Parliament, because Parliament knew that the servants of the Crown were not ignorant that they, and not the sovereign, were responsible for the acts of state: but while Parliament was reposing confidence in the opinion of ministers, it ought to be sure that these ministers were pursuing their own opinions. If a minister, accused of mal-administration, should say, "I was over-ruled in the cabinet, and was obliged to give way to the majority of the council;" such a defence could not, and ought not, to be admitted by that House. Such a minister had means in his power, by which he might have screened himself from responsibility in becoming an accessory to the guilt of others; he might have resigned; "and that minister, who, to preserve his situation, could submit to concur in measures that he condemned, must be one of the meanest of mortals; he betrayed his trust, and deserved the execration of his country": the conduct he should pursue would be to propose his plans to his sovereign; if they were approved, they would of course be carried into execution; if they were disapproved, he should lay down his employment. The Lord Advocate hoped that no one would suppose he alluded in the smallest degree to his noble friend (Lord North); every one knew the friendship that subsisted between them; and that he would go any length to support his private and his public character: he spoke in generals; but he could not help repeating, that the minister, who would sacrifice his opinion to preserve his situation, was unfit for society.

The learned Lord asked, to what end could the ministers aim at holding out a delusion by meaning one thing by the Speech and Address, and declaring in the most express manner that they meant another? He would be bold to say that Parliament could not be ensnared by such a delusion. The matter was impossible; the delusion would not hold a week: the

the fallacy must be detected. Besides, it must be a willing Parliament indeed that could be ensnared by such a poor, pitiful delusion, or that could receive such an imposition. [It was here called out, from the other side, Parliament would receive any imposition.] If they would, said the learned Lord, the noble Lord in the blue ribband need not have taken so round-about a method of deluding them. Common prostitutes require not much courtship or dalliance to win their favour. But certainly, in the present case, the cheat would be a very extraordinary one, were it possible to be a cheat, because it must so soon discover itself. His Lordship then argued upon the meaning of the words of the Address, and said, as the House knew, he pretended not to be a great master of the English language, yet he had sufficient knowledge of the import of words, added to a small share of common sense, to be convinced that the Address, as it was penned, pledged gentlemen to no one specific line of conduct in that House, but was merely that sort of language which it was most fit, under the circumstances of the times, for Parliament to hold to their sovereign. He took notice of the arguments of several gentlemen in the debate of the preceding day, and observed, that one gentleman had recommended the sending a herald to France to sue for peace; an idea which he reprobated as in the highest degree timid and impolitic. The capture of seven thousand brave men, under a noble and gallant commander, was certainly a serious and a severe circumstance; but it was not to be surmounted by any acts of despondency; vigorous exertion only could retrieve the misfortune.

Mr. Tho.
Townshend

Mr. T. Townshend spoke with energy against the Address, applauded the learned Lord for expressing his detestation of those ministers who suffered themselves to be overruled in their own department, and, from the mean desire of preserving their emoluments, submitted to execute the measures of which they did not approve. He trusted that his conviction in this point would be followed by his conviction in many others; and he should be extremely happy to see the noble Lord institute the question at which he had hinted—of the propriety of abandoning, or of continuing the American war: perhaps it might prosper in his hands. He said, when his honourable friend talked of the supercilious silence and empty loquacity of those who had undertaken to palm an Address, palmed with the grossest adulation on the House, he expected that the empty loquacity would take refuge in their supercilious silence; but he was mistaken;

ken: the learned Lord had spoken out, and he thanked him for it. He wished him therefore to make the motion, which, he said, would force gentlemen to speak out. The honourable gentleman said, that he was very desirous of giving support to his Majesty in the prosecution of such measures as should be necessary in the maintenance of our rights and interests; but he could not agree to the Address, because it certainly and clearly pledged the House to the continuance of the American war. He paid a warm tribute of praise to Lord Cornwallis, who, when reduced to that extremity that he was constrained to surrender those soldiers, to whom he had acted like, and who loved him, as a father, yet his first care was to preserve the fleet, upon which he knew the very existence of this country depended. What did the first Lord of the Admiralty deserve, who failed to rescue this brave man, and his gallant band of followers, who were perhaps the prime of the English army. But he supposed he should be corrected by the advocate of this Lord of the Admiralty, the member for Huntingdon, and told, that calling these men the prime of the army, was an insult to those soldiers who were not present.

Lord Mulgrave said, if the honourable gentleman meant by the term advocate any thing else than the friendship of one honest man as another, he misrepresented and slandered him. He was as independent, as honest, and as zealous to promote, by personal exertion or suffering, the welfare of his country, as the member for Whitchurch, or any other man in the House. Lord Mulgrave.

Mr. T. Townshend said he had answered an assertion of the noble Lord fairly; and as to the term *advocate*, he would give him no explanation of it whatever. Of the first Lord of the Admiralty, as a public man, he had a right to speak, and to proclaim him, what he sincerely thought he was, a public criminal, and the author of all our naval calamities. In referring to what the noble Lord said yesterday, he was regular, for the present was in the nature of an adjourned debate. Mr. Tho. Townshend.

The House interfered. Mr. George Onslow spoke to order. The Speaker blamed the gentlemen for making use of the names of the respective places for which they served.

Mr. Fox congratulated his honourable friend, Mr. Pitt, on the very powerful effect which had arisen from his oratory. In one speech he had done that which other less able men had been attempting in vain to bring about for years. He had drawn from a person, connected with administration, something like an open and a free declaration. This was to Mr. Fox;

be ranked among the other auspicious omens which had attended his introduction into that House. He used the words "something like speaking out," because, till the learned Lord cleared his doubts, and explained certain points that appeared to him to require explanation, he could not say that the noble and learned Lord's speech was so explicit and so open as he possibly would wish the House to suppose. Upon the whole, the learned Lord had spoken out, and he thanked him for doing so, and trusted he would explain the doubt that he had left upon his mind. But first the learned Lord had said a great deal on the ground of gentlemen's having forced a meaning upon the Address, to which he, by voting for it, never intended to pledge himself. In answer to this, he could only say, that every production committed to writing must be judged of and construed by its phraseology and by its words. It was no argument to him for a minister or his advocate; (he begged pardon for the word, it really was an accidental lapse of expression; he meant the friend, defender, or supporter of the minister; but he hoped his error, which he solemnly declared was unintentional, would convince the noble Lord over the way [Lord Mulgrave] that the word advocate might be used without any design of offence.) To return to his subject, it was no argument to him, that a minister, or the supporter of a minister declared in his place, that he did not mean what the words committed to black and white actually imported. He could not dissociate language and ideas; *littera scripta manet*; and he must necessarily direct his arguments to that which was likely to become a parliamentary record, and not to the fleeting speech of an hour.

But to leave arguing upon a point which had been so much discussed, and about which, in fact, there could not be a second opinion. He wished to come to that which he would beg the learned Lord to explain. If the House had been called upon to pledge themselves for the support of the American war, then there would have been reason for all this debate; "but that a day, and an opportunity would occur soon when the House would fairly come to issue on the question of the American war." This is what he wished to have explained. When would that day and that opportunity occur? How was it to be brought about? He wished sincerely for the learned Lord to be explicit upon this head. How was it to be brought to issue? He confessed, for his own part, he saw many difficulties.

to move for acknowledging the independence of America, by improper means of bringing it to issue, for that would

would prevent us from taking advantage of circumstances. To move for the withdrawing of troops would be unseasonable, for it might be necessary to the prosecution of the war against France to hold military stations in America. To disagree to a continental war would be improper, for a dispute would arise about the meaning of the term continental war. In short, he knew not how the question could come to issue: if the learned Lord really meant what he said, he would have no objection to state what day and what question he alluded to, when he said the day was near, on which gentlemen must speak fully and fairly to the question of the American war. That day he longed for with the most eager impatience; and if he could possibly guess, he should suppose the day meant, was that, when the army was to be voted. The learned Lord had stood up with a degree of manly firmness, not very common to the friends of the minister on the present occasion; and he had declared, he meant to be explicit. If he really meant what he said, he would have no objection to speak out, and declare what day he alluded to. If this question was not fairly answered, he would be bold to tell the noble and learned Lord, that his affectation of speaking out, was, if possible, more contemptible than the hackneyed evasions of the minister.

The *Lord Advocate* said, when ministers called upon the House to vote a substitution of force to replace the seven thousand men lost with Lord Cornwallis, they must meet the question fully. [Mr. Fox called over for an explanation of the word substitution. The Lord Advocate repeated his first sentence. Mr. Fox shook his head!] The *Ld Advocate*.

Mr. *Burke* rose next: he declared that if any thing yet remained necessary to be done or said to convince the House that the Address pledged them to the continuance of the American war, he would read part of the Address of the House to the King in the year 1778, which pledged them to the support of the French and American war for the sake of our rights and interests. This he said was his text on which he would preach, by comparing this with the assertion, that it pledged the House to nothing; and comparing both with the language of the Scotch, and the Irish, and the English ministers; and lastly, by comparing and applying them all to the consciences of the House. The Address was a delusion, and he was not a little amazed to hear the learned Lord make it an argument that it could not be a delusion, because it could only last a week; good God, did the noble and learned Lord know so very little of the minister, as to Mr. *Burke*.

imagine, that the shortness of time, which a delusion could exist, was any reason for his not practising it? The noble Lord dealt in cheats and delusions; they were the daily traffic of his invention! A week! The noble Lord had often held out a cheat for half that time! For a day only! Nay, for a single hour. He had practised cheats upon the House, which died away even before the debate was ended, to favour which they were contrived. Had not that House seen the noble Lord's cheat upon the subject of the Conciliatory propositions? Had they not witnessed his dexterity in laying down his own cheat on that occasion, and adopting another which he thought he played off more advantageously? The noble Lord would continue to play off his cheats and delusions on that House as long as he thought it necessary, and had money enough at command to bribe gentlemen to pretend they believed them! It was no argument, therefore, to suppose that the shortness of time for which they were likely to operate, proved that they were not in fact delusions. The honourable gentleman said, the learned Lord, had ingeniously endeavoured to throw obscurity and confusion on the manner of conducting the war; nay, the ministers themselves were not clear in their ground respecting the Address; he said the Scotch Secretary of State and the Irish Secretary of State, had both of them, in another place, held a language totally different from that of the South British minister in that House. The Scotch and Irish Secretaries had expressly declared, that the Address did pledge those who voted for it to a prosecution of the American war; the one directly said they were pledged, the other hinted the same thing. The South British Secretary and his supporters had told the House the direct contrary. What sort of confidence then ought gentlemen to place in an administration, where there was so glaring a want of concert? What firmness, what vigour could arise from the councils of men so disunited? How was this difference of argument upon the same subject to be accounted for? Was it owing to their different places of birth? Were Scotch, Irish, and English so jumbled together, that there was a Babel in the Cabinet, and such a confusion of tongues, that the one could not understand what the other said? The learned Lord told the House, he did not mean to pledge himself for the prosecution of the American war, when he voted for the Address? What satisfaction was that to the House? The declaration was the private declaration of an individual member of Parliament. The Address was the act of the House;

House; but now he came to apply to the consciences of the House, and to discharge his own. The tenth article of the Capitulation shocked him beyond measure. Earl Cornwallis was forced to surrender up to the civil jurisdiction of the country the loyalists who had come to his standard. These men we had butchered in cold blood; they were doomed to be hung, drawn, and quartered; and a young Prince of the blood was sent out to be spectator of the horrid executions of those who were quelling the rebellion against the Crown, executed for rebelling against the Congress. What a scene, cried he, for the eyes of the royal youth, to behold the faithful adherents of his Father hanging in quarters on every headland as he sails along. What a report to make of the objects that first struck his view in that country, where he was taught to hope he should be every where received with welcome. Here, Sir, I beheld the bloody remnants of our faithful friend, Mr. Williams, gibbeted up for a terror to all who adhere to us; and a little farther another friend, and yet another, and another. But is not this one fact among a thousand, sufficient to convince us of the horrible iniquity of the measures we have hitherto pursued? and is it not the strongest reason for our forsaking a system so pernicious? He worked up his passions so much in descanting on the shocking cruelty of the circumstance, that his whole frame was visibly and violently agitated. He declared the blood of all the Americans, who lost their lives in consequence of that capitulation, rested on the head of Lord Cornwallis, or of ministry. As he had no right to charge him with it in the other House, where the Earl was entitled to a seat, he would make those walls re-echo with it, till Lord Cornwallis had accounted for a conduct so disgraceful to the British name, so distressing to humanity! and while he did this, he had the highest and most respectful regard for the virtues of the noble Earl. Some dreadful circumstances must have attended the giving up of his friends. He drew a comparison between the conduct of General Burgoyne at the surrender at Saratoga, and that of Lord Cornwallis at York-town. He reminded ministers of the manner in which they had treated General Burgoyne, who gave up no loyalists to butchery. He brought to their recollection the doubts entertained by them of the General's having a right to his seat in Parliament while he was a prisoner, and the manner in which they had prevented his throwing himself at the feet of his Sovereign, and asked them if such was their treatment of a General who obtained such honourable

terms

terms of capitulation, what was Lord Cornwallis to expect? He next shewed to what extent the power of protection described by the American secretary had been carried. By fire and sword we had forced the Americans to join the King's troops, and now those very men, who had been fighting to quell rebellion, were to be executed with ignominy, for having themselves been rebels. After working up himself and his hearers to the most distressful state of emotion, he branded the ministers as the cause of the horrid disasters he had described, and declared the Address to be the most hypocritical, infamous, abandoned, lying paper, that ever that House had been called upon to vote. After turning this affecting circumstance into various points of view, he mentioned a most singular fact. Earl Cornwallis was governor of the tower of London, and consequently Mr. Laurens was his prisoner. Colonel Laurens, son to Mr. Laurens, was appointed captain general of prisoners in America, and consequently Earl Cornwallis was prisoner to the son of his own prisoner. This was a circumstance that would incline a man the least addicted to superstition, to think that there was a special Providence in this affair, brought about for the purpose of humbling the proud, and teaching to all by the vicissitudes of human fortune, the duties of tenderness and humility. He also mentioned this particular circumstance, that on the 17th day of October exactly to a day, four years from the surrender of General Burgoyne at Saratoga, Lord Cornwallis beat a parley to capitulate at Yorktown.

Mr. Courtenay.
say.

Mr. Courtenay said, no man could be more affected by what fell from the honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) than he was. His splendid diction, his manly elocution, his brilliant periods, his pointed logic conveyed in a torrent of rapid and impressive eloquence, brought strongly to his recollection that great and able statesman, whose memory every grateful and generous Briton reveres. The honourable gentleman stood high by his own superior abilities, yet still the memory of that great man threw a ray of glory round him. He said he would only trespass on the indulgence of the House for a few minutes, as on such a great and important question he did not choose to give a silent vote. At this distressful and calamitous moment, the House of Commons were called upon, by the proposed Address, to support the just and necessary war in which we were engaged, against the united force of France and Spain, and against America as their ally. It was a war of necessity, of cruel and dire necessity,

necessity, on which principle alone he would attempt to justify it. If there was a hope, a gleam of hope, that by acknowledging the independence of America, she could be detached from France, it would demand the serious attention of the House, whether such terms should not be granted. Though the endearing and heartfelt names of colonies; and mother country, should no longer exist, yet great commercial, great national advantages; would be derived from an union between people naturally connected by the same language, manners, and religion, and both inspired by the same ardent spirit of liberty; great and essential benefits might be mutually received by both countries, cemented by a federal union, and Britain, on such a liberal and enlarged system of policy, might again become a great and flourishing nation, the envy of Europe, and the admiration of the world!

The honourable gentleman observed that much had been said on the American war; he was ever ready to avow his sentiments on that subject; he had always thought it neither wise, politic, nor expedient; on every occasion, when that war had become the subject of conversation, he had very freely, perhaps sometimes indiscreetly, declared his opinion, insignificant as it was; yet still the sentiments of the meanest individual, in a free country, on a great, interesting, constitutional question, were of some consequence. On the first day he had the honour of speaking in that House, he had expressed the same sentiments, to which he should always adhere. He had voted for the Address on the explanation of the ministers who had got up in their places, and had explicitly declared, that the House was not pledged, or meant to be drawn in by the words of that Address (which to some gentlemen seemed so very exceptionable) to carry on the war, for the express purpose of subjugating America, but on general terms to carry on that just and necessary war in which we were engaged, in the most effectual manner, for the safety and honour of Great-Britain, and the protection of his Majesty's dominions.

He said, he did not like the voice of despondency; that he trusted there was an elasticity in a British mind which would always rise in proportion to the pressure of calamity; but that he was surprised and mortified to hear a noble Lord of the admiralty assert, as an apology for the acknowledged inferiority of the British fleet at this awful moment, that France, from her great resources, was enabled to have a superior

superior fleet; that in the reigns of king William and queen Anne she had one: If there was truth in this voice, it sounded the funeral knell of Great-Britain, and might well appall the ears of the people. But Mr. Courtenay added, he was happy to find that the assertion was not founded; it was contradicted by historical facts; and the noble Lord who made it, seemed to have forgot the glorious annals of his profession; he seemed to have forgot the action of La Hogue, where the marine of France received a blow, from which it never recovered; he seemed to have forgot that memorable action where British valour was so very conspicuous, that king James in the exultation of his heart, forgetting his own situation, and that every hope was blasted by the destruction of that fleet, destined to restore him to his Throne; forgetting every thing for one moment, but that he was an Englishman, (the only moment of his life which merits an eulogium) burst out into this generous exclamation on seeing the seamen in swarms scrambling up the high sides of the French ships from their boats, "Ah, none but my brave English could do so brave an action!" The noble Lord, when he made the assertion, must have forgot the action off Malaga, when Sir Cloudesley Shovel defeated the French fleet, though superior to him in number of guns and men, as well as in weight of metal. The noble Lord must have forgot the conjunct expeditions which were carried on in those reigns; the reduction of Barcelona and Gibraltar, which could not have been effected without maintaining that superiority at sea on which the existence of this country depends.

He concluded by saying, that no man could lament, more than he did the late disastrous event in Virginia: he had listened with indignation to invidious comparisons on that event. Lord Cornwallis had fallen (unassisted and unsupported) not ignobly by the united arms of France and America: he had not fallen in the pride of presumption, by the hue and cry of the peasantry, by the *passé comitatus* of the country; he had fallen admired and respected by the enemy, and his chains were wreathed with laurels: may he then live to receive the reward of his valour from the hands of his discerning sovereign! He is an honour to his profession, and will add a lustre to the highest honour that can be conferred on him; and the sacred and applauding voice of the people will sanctify their sovereign's choice.

The House then divided on the motion for bringing up the report. — Ayes 131; noes 54.

December

November 29.

This day the Commons presented their Address to the King at St. James's.

The humble Address of the House of Commons to the King. Address.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

We, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, return your Majesty the thanks of this House, for your most gracious Speech from the throne.

We assure your Majesty, that we see with concern that the war is still unhappily prolonged by that restless ambition which first excited our enemies to commence it, and which still continues to disappoint your Majesty's earnest desire and diligent exertion to restore the public tranquillity.

We are sensibly affected by your Majesty's paternal expressions of concern for the real welfare of your subjects: and we receive with the strongest emotions of duty and gratitude your Majesty's gracious and endearing declaration, that you should not answer the trust committed to the Sovereign of a free people, nor make a suitable return to your subjects for their constant, zealous, and affectionate attachment to your person, family, and government, if you consented to sacrifice, either to your own desire of peace, or to their temporary ease and relief, those essential rights and permanent interests, upon the maintenance and preservation of which the future strength and security of this country must ever principally depend.

We declare, on our part, that we know no means of making to your Majesty any return so suitable and so just, and of answering the great trust committed to us by those whom we represent, as by giving your Majesty this firm assurance, that we are resolved to assist and support your Majesty to the utmost of our power, in maintaining and preserving the essential rights and permanent interests of your crown and people.

The favourable appearance of affairs in the East Indies, and the safe and prosperous arrival of the numerous commercial fleets of your kingdoms, have given us great satisfaction: but we sincerely regret that your Majesty's assiduous endeavours to guard your extensive dominions have not in all places been attended with success; and we learn with the deepest concern, that the events of war have been very

unfortunate to your Majesty's arms in Virginia, and have ended in the loss of your forces in that province.

We are fully persuaded, that the principal view of the confederacy of our enemies was to foment and maintain the rebellion in North America; and, under the specious delusion of the establishment of an independent empire, to render your Majesty's Colonies subservient to the power and influence of the Crown of France: but your Majesty may rely on our steady assistance to second your Majesty's endeavours to defeat the dangerous designs of our enemies, equally prejudicial to the real interests of America and to those of Great Britain.

We will not fail to resume the great and momentous consideration of the state and condition of the dominions and revenues which this country possesses in the East Indies; and we trust, that, in our deliberations on those important matters, we shall proceed with the same spirit and temper in which they were begun, and with the same care and anxiety to consider how those remote provinces may be held and governed with the greatest security and advantage to this nation, and by what means the happiness of the native inhabitants may be best promoted.

In this arduous conjuncture, we consider it as our first duty to our country to grant your Majesty such supplies as the circumstances of affairs shall be found to require. We cannot but feel that the war is burthensome and expensive; but we are convinced, at the same time, that it is just and necessary; and nothing on our parts shall be wanting to give efficacy and success to the valour of your Majesty's fleets and armies: and we still have a firm confidence, that, by a vigorous, animated, and united exertion of the resources and faculties of the nation, and of the spirit of a free people, your Majesty will be enabled, under the protection of Divine Providence, to restore the blessing of a safe and honourable peace to all your dominions.

His Majesty's Answer.

Gentlemen,

Answer.

I return you my cordial thanks for this very loyal, dutiful, and affectionate Address. It breathes the spirit and firmness of the Representatives of a brave and free people. Nothing could afford me so much satisfaction, or tend so effectually to the public safety and welfare in the present conjuncture.

November 30.

Mr. Minchin.

Mr. *Minchin* rose to make some motions, of which he had given

given notice, respecting the Navy, which he introduced by an argument to the following purport. It was the duty, he said, of every Member of that House to enquire into the expenditure of the public money; to see that the money voted for public services was properly applied to those services. The Admiralty department was conducted with more mystery than any other under the Crown; and the enormous unfunded debt, which was to be always found hanging on that department, was a subject of alarm to every watchful Member of that House, and a necessary object of enquiry. The present mode practised by the Admiralty and Navy Boards, in making out estimates, and stating the expenditure of money voted for the Navy, was so dark and intricate, so complex and disguised, that the estimates generally laid before that House were not more intelligible than Egyptian hieroglyphics. To simplify those estimates, and thereby render them intelligible; to make them so plain and easy, that Ministers might be deprived of the resource they found in dark and ambiguous statings, to conceal from the public the manner in which their money was expended; was the subject of a few motions which he intended to submit to the House. He had often had it in contemplation to endeavour to discover a mode by which the people might know whether the money voted by the Representatives was really applied to public uses; and the best mode that had occurred to him was to make the different officers of the different dock-yards to transmit their accounts upon oath to the Clerk of the House of Commons, and then it might be hoped that the people would know in what manner their money was expended.

According to the present mode of stating accounts, all the nation could learn was, that their money was spent; but how, or for what purposes, was a secret: immense sums were voted, but such a force as, from the greatness of the supplies, might be well expected, was not to be found. A noble Lord (Mulgrave) had said, in the debate on the Address, that, when Lord Hawke quitted the Admiralty-Board, the Navy was in a very bad situation; but that it had greatly improved under the administration of Lord Sandwich. This, however, was an assertion not grounded in fact; for he could prove the contrary to be truth. The Navy, when Lord Hawke left the Admiralty, October 1770, consisted of eighty ships of the line, fit for service; but, under Lord Sandwich, there were no more than seventy nine on the 15th

of March 1781: and though it was said, that Lord Hawke's ships were built in a hurry, of green wood, and consequently could not remain long fit for service, it was nevertheless a well-known fact, that several of these green-wood ships were actually employed in the most dangerous and laborious expeditions, though under new names, to disguise them; while many of the ships that were built after the improved method of Lord Sandwich (*i. e.* leaving them standing in their frames till their timbers were rotten) had been found so little fit for service, that within the space of *one* year several of them had been *four* times in dock.—Such was the produce of the vast sums voted for the Navy!

He hoped that, from what he had said, Gentlemen would see with him the necessity of some regulations, that should be a check upon those to whom the application of the public money was intrusted: that, and that alone was the object he had in view; and for this purpose he had framed his motions. One was, "That the Commissioners of the dock-yards of Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Chatham, do give directions to the master mast-maker, master smith, master shipwright, master storekeeper, clerk of the rope-yard, &c. &c. to transmit to the Clerk of the House of Commons an account of the quantity and value of timber, ropes, sails, iron, pitch, tar, hemp, &c. in their respective departments; together with an account of the quantity and value of each of the above articles employed in building, rebuilding, or repairing, any of his Majesty's ships of war for the last three years, stating the name and rate of each ship."

He said that the use he intended to make of this and the other motions he had to offer, was to have the papers called for referred to a committee, who should be empowered to call for more, if more should be necessary, in order to enable them to digest and lay before the House, resolutions preparatory to the introduction of a bill, that should have for its object the proper application of the public money to the services for which it is voted. He concluded with making the above motion.

Sir G. Yonge Sir George Yonge seconded the motion.

Mr. Penton. Mr. Penton said, that nothing would give him more pleasure, than that the manner, in which the money voted for the Navy, was applied, should be fully understood by the House; and therefore he could not have the least objection to the motive which induced the Honourable Gentleman to make his motion; it was the just apprehension of giving information

to our enemies, that made him form any opposition at all to it ; but to the motion in its present state, he really had one objection, which if removed, would leave the motion in such a state, that he would very readily vote for it : his objection was, that the *quantum* of all the stores in hand, in the three great arsenals of the kingdom, was called for, and of course would be laid before the world : if that House alone was to read the account, he could have no apprehension for consequences ; but to pass the motion in its present form, would be to lay before our enemies the most dangerous information ; if therefore the Honourable Gentleman would consent to amend his motion, it should meet with his concurrence : the amendment he suggested, was that different officers of the yards, &c. do lay before the House an account of the quantity and value of timber, hemp, &c. delivered into the stores in any given year ; together with the quantity and value of each article used by them for the service of the public within the same year.

Mr. Minchin approved of the amendment and adopted it.

Lord *Mulgrave* opposed the motion. He said, that the officers mentioned in the motion, to whose care the different stores were committed, might be good judges of the quantity, but not at all of the value of them ; and therefore he thought it would be more proper that the return of the quantity might be made to the Navy-Board, where the value could be most properly ascertained ; because it was by contract with that Board that they were purchased. But he had an insurmountable objection to another part of the motion, which called for an account of the quantity and value of stores used in building, rebuilding, and repairs of ships : this would make our enemies acquainted with the state of our shipping, and enable them to guess when they would be fit for sea ; a dangerous piece of intelligence indeed ; and such as no nation in its senses would furnish its enemy with. Many expeditions which our enemies had planned were never carried into execution, because, knowing that we had such a number of ships in dock, they did not know how soon they might be ready for sea.

He wished, as much as the Honourable Gentleman, that the state of the stores could be made public ; they would be found such as would not discredit the Board of Admiralty ; and if the Honourable Gentleman had thought proper to have previously communicated to him the nature of his motions, he would have endeavoured to forward the object

as much as he could, by making enquiries how the business could be done most to the satisfaction of the House, without doing any thing injurious to the State; and if the Honourable Gentleman would withdraw his motion for the present, he would make all the enquiries he could to learn the best method of giving him and the House complete satisfaction.

- Mr. *Milchin* withdrew his motion.

Mr. *Burke*. Mr. *Burke* gave notice, that he intended to move at some convenient day for copies of the instructions sent to Sir George Rodney, relative to the disposal of the property found on the island of *San Eustatius*. When first mentioned that subject last session the objection then made to the measure was that the Admiral was absent, and that an enquiry into the subject could not be carried on unless the Admiral and General concerned were present to defend their conduct, or without injustice to them in their absence. But those Gentlemen being now in town, the objection of course did not now exist; and therefore he would enter upon the business whenever they should think proper, being ready, at the same time, to communicate to them the nature of the charges he intended to bring, that they might by these means have it in their power, if their services should be wanted out of the kingdom, to entrust some friend or friends with the heads of their defence, to be made for them in their absence.

Sir G. Rodney. Sir George Rodney desired the Honourable Gentleman would chuse his day: he was fully prepared to meet his charges; and the earlier the day, the better, because he was ordered for foreign service, and had not long to remain in the kingdom.—As he was then upon his legs, he would say a few words upon Lord Cornwallis's surrender: and first he said he thought it would be proper for him to state to the House the intelligence he had transmitted before he left the West-Indies, to the commander in chief of the fleet and army in America, and to the commanders in chief at Jamaica. He was proceeding, but the Speaker told him, that another opportunity would serve better than the present, as there was no motion on the subject before the House.

Lord North. Lord North said, though the business might be taken up at an early day, it could not be expected that the commanders should be called upon immediately for an answer: the Honourable Gentleman would first state his charges, and then the Admiral and General might take a proper time to make their defence.

Lord

Lord *Lisburne* said, that his brother, General Vaughan, had no objection to enter upon his defence as early as the Honourable Gentleman could wish. *Lord Lisburne.*

Mr. *Burke* said, the business undoubtedly was not of that nature, that, like a trial before a jury, it could be determined in a day. The instructions must be first produced. If it should be found, that Sir George Rodney and General Vaughan were directed by those instructions to do what they had done, then the business with respect to them was at an end, and the King's servants would be alone criminal. At present he made no charge; that must arise from the instructions: but he held it to be his duty to enquire into every attempt to violate the laws of nations, or introduce into countries, conquered by the arms of Great Britain, regulations contrary to her laws and constitution. *Mr. Burke.*

Sir *George Rodney* rose again, and said, Whether I had had instructions or not, my conduct would have been just what it was at St. Eustatius. *Sir G. Rodney.*

December the 4th was fixed.

Sir *Grey Cooper* moved the order of the day, which was for going into a committee of supply. *Sir Grey Cooper.*

Mr. *T. Pitt* rose, he said, to object to the Speaker's leaving the chair; and declared his resolution of dividing the House, whatever might be the reception of his arguments, and even if he were sure of finding himself the single person in that division who walked below the bar. It had been said, that on the first day he had recommended to the House to hold a *fullen silence*, and to say nothing in return to the King's most gracious Speech. In this he had been misunderstood and misrepresented. He had advised the House only to stay, till something becoming the feelings, the situation, and the dignity of the House, should be advised and considered, in place of the adulation, the flattery, and the delusion, with which they did approach their Sovereign. The situation of affairs made it disgraceful in the House to echo back the Minister's language—it was as degrading to the Parliament of a free people, as it was insulting to a great and gracious Prince; for to flatter in such a moment was to insult. He knew, and he wished to observe, the decencies of that House. No man could be more anxious than himself to pay his duty to the Throne; and it was for this reason that he had recommended to the House to delay for a few days, that they might deliberately consult and agree upon an Address which would become the House to present and the Monarch to receive. That the Sovereign of a free people should feel his breast swelled with indignation *Mr. T. Pitt.*

dignation on the view of calamities so unprecedented and so disastrous, he could not wonder; that he should be roused to the ambition of reinstating his empire in its flourishing condition, was not surprising—it was a natural, a laudable ambition. Considering the Speech, therefore, in this light, it claimed his admiration; but, viewing it as it really ought to be viewed, as the Speech of his Majesty's Ministers—of those Ministers who had ruined their country, he must declare that it was a hardy and a shameless Speech, in the severest sense of these epithets. He was astonished to find those Ministers, who ought to appear before their injured country humbled and penitent, as in private they ought to feel the compunctions of remorse, for the fatal consequences of their delusions, fallacies, and madness,—come forward, and, without common decency, tell the people that they meant to persevere.

This had been his idea on the first day of the session—that the House should take time to consider the answer which they were to give. It was still his idea; and he now rose to object to the voting a supply—not that he meant to withhold a supply in the present exigency of affairs—he would grant liberally—he would give Government the utmost support; but he would have a pledge, that that which the House granted cheerfully should be applied with wisdom and effect. He would not say what pledge would be satisfactory, further than this,—that he should expect a striking proof of their contrition and repentance—of their conviction of former folly—and of their resolution of amendment—by instituting a scheme of real exertion, well-directed vigour, and wise endeavours to regain the lost honour of their country, and to restore us to our former respect among the belligerent nations of Europe. At present, what was the reason that foreign nations had no confidence in us? It was because our Government was no longer what it used to be—a Government lodged both in the King and his People: it was now, by means of corruption, vested only in the servants of the Crown; and therefore the nature of our Government, which formerly derived so much lustre from its democracy, being changed, the powers of Europe, who formerly courted our alliance, now scorned and reviled us, and would not place confidence in our councils.—It was not a change of Ministers—it was for a total change of system and measures that he looked; and, that his wishes should be gratified, he would oppose privilege to prerogative, and vote that not a shilling should be given by the People to the Crown, until they should first have received this earnest.

Sir Grey Cooper said, that when, on a former occasion, the Hon. Gentleman had declared he would oppose the supply, he

he really imagined that it was an expression that had dropped from him in the heat of debate, and that on cooler reflection he would not persevere in his resolution: he was therefore the more surprized to find the Hon. Member still in the same mind. The Hon. Gentleman did not forget, that, by the Address to the Throne, the House had pledged itself to grant some supplies, though it did not bind itself to vote any for the American War: Had we not other Enemies than the Americans? And did the Hon. Gentleman wish to leave the nation without either fleet or army to defend it? This, indeed, would be a most agreeable event to France and Spain. *Hoc Ithacus velit; et magno mercentur Atridae!* but he must look upon such a resolution in no better light than public despair, and political suicide. Formerly, indeed, it was the practice of Parliament to make a redress of grievances precede supplies; but then the King had revenues from Crown lands, and other resources, with which he was obliged to support his civil and military establishments; but now that the Crown has no settled revenue but for its own support, and the people have in their own hands all the other revenues, and the care of providing for all military establishments, it would be strange indeed that they should refuse to vote a supply destined solely for their own protection: no instance of such a refusal could be found since the Revolution, since the revenues for the support of the King, and the support of the State, had been dissociated. He trusted, therefore, that Gentlemen would not now begin to set so bad a precedent, and give so bad an opinion of our situation, as to let all Europe have it to say that the Parliament had left Government at a stand.

Mr. Fox said that Ministers and their Friends had a double way of reasoning about the Address: when they wanted to get it through the House, they said it bound the House to nothing; but now that it was passed, and that an opposition was made to the supply, they argued, that by the Address the House had bound itself to grant it. The Honourable Gentleman from whom the opposition came, had undoubtedly hit upon the best means of procuring to the people that change of measures upon which their political salvation depended—to delay the supply, though not to refuse it; to delay it until some pledge should be given by Ministers to the nation, that they felt compunction for past errors; that they had discovered their fault, and were resolved to reform. The Honourable Member very properly refrained from naming what pledge it would be necessary to give; that ought to come from them-

Mr. Fox

selves, but not from themselves only ; Parliament should also give a pledge ; and a better could not be devised, than an impeachment.—That House had once felt the corruption of Ministers to be gaining ground so rapidly, that they came to the resolution that the influence of the Crown was increasing and ought to be diminished. Ministers had basely advised their Master to rule by the silent means of intrigue, instead of reigning in the hearts of his people : they had destroyed the democracy of the constitution, and all was now swallowed up in the monarchy : the forms indeed of the constitution were still in being, as an Honourable Gentleman had observed, but the vitals of it were consumed ; the temple stood, but the *dei tutelares* had deserted it. The Honourable Baronet had said, that since the Revolution no instance could be found of an opposition to the supply ; it was true ; but since the Revolution had there ever been a period like the present ? Had there ever been a reign so unfortunate ? Had there ever been a circumstance so paradoxical, as a Parliament resolving that the influence of the Crown ought to be diminished, without being able to effect a diminution ? Grievances, said the Honourable Baronet, used formerly to precede a supply ; but then it was because the King had large hereditary revenues with which he could support his establishments : it was true ; but since the separation of the two establishments, the Court and the military, had taken place, Ministers had advised their Sovereign to think only of himself ; and in proportion as the means of his subjects decreased, the expences of his Court were increased. Formerly, when that party of men, known by the name of Whigs, was in office, the King perhaps was not so rich in money, but he was greatly so in glory and dominion : now that the Whigs are not in office, and the nation is poor, the King is rich at home, but poor in glory and dominion ; both being sacrificed by the measures of his Ministers.

But, says the Honourable Baronet, will you disband your fleets and armies, and leave the country at the mercy of her enemies ? Certainly not : it is in the power of the Ministers to obtain the supplies, which are only delayed, whenever they may think proper to give such a pledge as may be sufficient to convince the public that they are determined totally to change their measures. But the French and Spaniards will rejoice at Government being at a stand. Then, O House of Bourbon ! might you be called restless indeed, not to be satisfied with the administration of those men, whose measures

asures gave you Grenada, St. Vincent's, Dominica, Tobago; and, what is greater than all the Grenades, St. Vincent's, Dominicas, and Tobagos—the friendship of America! Restless indeed you must be, if you could rejoice at the removal of men who have served you so well, and so greatly contributed to your successes against this country. He had said in a former debate that Ministers were paid by France, or by some other means, for the measures they pursued; or that they deserved to be paid; and he was still of the same opinion. It was a matter of the utmost indifference to him, whether Ministers were in the pay of France; or, in order to preserve their places, concurred, for the sake of the emoluments of office, in measures which they knew must be ruinous to the country. He did not wish not to have an army; but how could he trust an army to the hands of the present Ministers, unless he wished to see it surrendered up to Washington? One army was lost at Saratoga, another at York-Town; and God only knew what third place would be signalized by the loss of a third army. The people felt those losses and disgraces; but Ministers must not be blamed, because they criminate the commanders—General Burgoyne was blamed; Sir William Howe was blamed; Sir Henry Clinton was blamed; Sir Samuel Hood was blamed; and so was Admiral Graves: but this must not exculpate Ministers; for if the Generals and Admirals were all to blame, Ministers must be so too, for employing commanders unequal to the task imposed upon them.

Mr. Adam said, that nothing could be more improper than the line of conduct recommended by those gentlemen who refused to vote for the supply; it was the first dictate of despair, and would be tantamount to telling the enemy that we are no longer able for war, but ready to accept such terms as they shall think proper to impose: not so had Louis 14th spoken, when his kingdom was in a thousand times worse situation than ours.—When the victorious Marlborough had ravaged the country almost to the very gates of Paris, what would the world have thought of that Monarch, if, holding his bed of justice, surrounded by his nobles, he had declared in the face of the world that he must renounce his grandson, because, so far from being able to support him on the throne of Spain, he could scarcely defend his own capital? What would the world have thought of Chamillard, if he could have advised that Monarch to such a step? All mankind, no doubt, would have thought them mad, for thus proclaiming their sentiments in full Parliament. That King did no such thing; he persevered; and, after having
 * L. been

been reduced to the lowest ebb, his perseverance carried him through, and he at last had the satisfaction to see his grandson acknowledged King of Spain. We should imitate his spirit, and, like him, we might triumph in the end.

Lord Al-
thorpe.

Lord *Althorpe* said, he was thoroughly satisfied of the necessity and propriety of with-holding the supplies for a short time, by the strength and weight of the argument made use of by the Honourable Gentleman who first opposed the motion.

Mr. Mon-
tagu.

Mr. *Montagu* spoke on the same side as Lord *Althorpe*, to whom he paid some very handsome compliments on his promising abilities; and said, that the reason why supplies had not been denied since the Revolution, was, that till lately the principles of the Revolution had been observed, and rendered this interference of the Commons unnecessary.

Lord Frede-
rick Camp-
bell.

Lord *Frederick Campbell* declared his resolution was for granting a supply immediately.

Lord North

Lord *North* said, he rose to explain how far the House was bound and not bound by the Address: it certainly was not bound to the American or any other war; but it was bound to make a provision for the necessary expences of Government. It had promised it; and, unless gentlemen wished that there should be no Government at all, a supply ought undoubtedly to be granted. Gentlemen said they wished to strengthen the Crown by with-holding the supplies, as by that means they would force Ministers to adopt such measures as would regain to them the confidence both of their fellow-subjects and of foreign powers. It was well that gentlemen had said, that, by with-holding the supplies, they meant to strengthen the Crown; it was an intention, which, if they had not been pleased to reveal, no one could ever have been able to guess. He was for strengthening the hands of Government by granting a supply; they, by with-holding it: the matter was at issue between them; which then was most in the right? The granting of a supply speedily and cheerfully would convince our enemies that we were not depressed by our misfortunes; the with-holding a supply would produce this dangerous consequence, that our enemies would be taught to believe, that, in this most critical moment, the King and his Parliament are no longer one. [The Noble Lord begged pardon for saying "the King"—Gentlemen would know he meant "the Crown."] Such conduct would only become a nation ready to accept any terms that a conqueror should dictate, and not a people who wished to treat with arms in their hands. But, in another point of view, it was the maddest line of conduct that could possibly be conceived; for though we should

should renounce to-morrow all the wars in which we were engaged, still there would be a necessity for a supply to support even our peace establishments. To refuse such a supply might be thought, in those who refused it, to proceed from a bad intention; but he was ready to admit that the intention of those gentlemen who opposed the supply was good, because he knew by personal experience that the intentions of men were often mistaken: he had often himself been the object of censures and reproaches, which originated solely in this circumstance, that those who censured him were totally ignorant of the integrity of his heart. But gentlemen said they did not mean to refuse the supply; they only wished to delay it for a few days: but where was the certainty that, at the end of a few days, gentlemen would be more ready to grant a supply than this day? It depended upon circumstances and events; and if these events should not in four or five days take place, then the same reason will still continue for delaying the supply. A pledge must be given to Parliament; but what that pledge is, nobody has thought proper to mention: with some it might be a change of Ministry; with others a renunciation of the American war; with a third set, of the Dutch war. One gentleman had said that many grievances existed, which ought to be redressed: the consideration of those grievances, and their remedies, must take up a considerable time, and in the interim we must be without fleets or armies. The influence of the Crown must be reduced, says another gentleman; but can that be the work of a day? The influence must be first discovered, traced up to its source, and then remedied; this must also be a work of time; and in the interim, the trade and navigation of the empire must be destroyed for want of the navy! Another gentleman must consult his constituents, and says that all the Members ought to do the same, before they vote away the money of the people: the sense of the people at large must therefore be taken, and a species of general election resorted to, before a supply can be granted; and until that sense could be taken, no supply was to be granted. Did gentlemen see the folly of this conduct? He trusted they did; and that they would not persevere in an opposition to the supply, which would be madness, even in time of peace, but dreadfully fatal in the present stage of the war.

Mr. *Viner* said, though he was no advocate for the American war, yet he thought it might be dangerous to delay the supplies, and therefore he should vote for granting them.

Mr.

Mr. T. Pitt, in reply, said, I should not have trespassed upon the usual indulgence of this House, having had the honour to submit to you the subject of this debate, if a circumstance had not happened that calls upon me, in a more peculiar manner, to explain myself upon what it would be so extremely improper I should pass over in silence. The Noble Lord in the blue ribbon dropped a word in the heat of argument, which he corrected himself in at the moment, and which, however irregular, and more particularly so in the Minister, I will do him the justice to believe, had not the smallest intention to offend against the rules of this House, much less to intimidate the debate by the authority of a name, which it is therefore the usage of Parliament most cautiously to avoid mentioning. After however having done justice to the intention of the Noble Lord, and having declared how far I am from wishing to impute to him the smallest blame; permit me, Sir, to say, that that name having been used in the debate. I should feel myself wanting in the respect I owe towards that Personage, if I did not declare the most loyal attachment, and the most dutiful sentiments, towards the person of his Majesty. The Noble Lord had said, "Is it fit to hold out to all Europe, that the King and his Parliament are no longer *one*?" God forbid, Sir, that I should live to see the melancholy hour, when the King and his Parliament shall be disunited. But, Sir, if the Noble Lord had used that constitutional expression which is only known to this House in our debates; had he warned us against the appearance that the Crown and the Parliament were no longer *one*; I will tell the Noble Lord, without disguise, that such was my intention, such was my only purpose, in the proposition of this day. Yes, Sir, it is my wish to set the Crown and the Parliament at variance, in direct opposition to each other. I trust I do not hazard myself in this expression. What, Sir, is the Crown but the *executive* power of Government? What is Parliament but the *deliberative*? What is this House but that branch of the deliberative power that is trusted with the *purse* of the People? Sir, it is because these powers are not *one*, it is because they are disunited, that this Government has obtained the admiration and envy of every other nation, and that I have now the honour to address you in that chair. When the Crown, when the executive power, shall be ill advised and ill administered, it is for Parliament, it is for the deliberative power, to interpose; and more peculiarly for this House to exert its important privilege, by shutting up the purse with which it is entrusted. A long and obstinate perseverance in a fatal system of error has brought this country, through successive calamities, to the brink of the precipice, if it is not already in it. What then

is, our last resource? No longer to appeal to the reason, or the feelings of Ministers; for their conduct has been in the teeth of reason and argument, and we have too much experience that they have no feeling. It is to this House we must make our last appeal. The remedy is in our hands, and the crisis calls loudly that we should exert it. The prerogative of the Crown stands on the one side; it has a right to bind us to the war, and to the ministers who shall have the conduct of it. What have we on the other side to oppose to this prerogative, but the privileges of this House, the exercise of which upon this day will perhaps decide the future existence of the country. The Noble Lord has, with his usual ability, endeavoured to throw into a light of ridicule the proposition of *supporting Government* by withholding all the supplies of Government, till some pledge is given to this House of a change of system from a sense of contrition for past errors. Now, let me ask the Noble Lord, which he esteems his best supporter in private life, his friend, or his flatterer? His friend, who sincerely tells him necessary, though unpalatable truths; who shews him the errors of his conduct, and who opposes them with the intention of extricating him from the mischiefs he is involved in—or his flatterer, who, indifferent to his ruin, assists every delusion that can plunge him deeper into perdition? Yes, Sir, Government has been supported. Four score millions buried already in this war, three score millions annihilated for ever in the pockets of the stockholders by the reduction of the funds, a depreciation of at least one-third of all the lands in England, are the confidence that has been reposed in Government:—what has it purchased for us, but the dismemberment of half our empire, and perhaps the extinction of our commerce! Go on, Sir; support Government but a year or two longer as it has been hitherto supported, and there will scarce remain a Crown upon the head that wears it.

The Noble Lord is pleased to acquiesce in the undoubted right of this House to withhold or to deny supplies of the year; but, if we may judge by his arguments, which apply to every possible case, it is one of those rights which can never be with propriety exerted. Alas! Sir, I would not thank him for the right without the exercise of it. We have heard enough of speculative rights, and they have cost us dear enough already. If it is merely a right in theory, it is not worth contending for: if it is an important right, and essential to the constitution, it must be such a right as may be safely exercised when the occasion calls for it; and there never was an occasion that called for that exercise more than the present. But the Noble Lord contends, that it has not been brought forth since the Revolution: a very worthy and dear friend of mine (Mr. Frederick Montagu) has assigned the reason—because since that glorious era the principles of the Revolution

lusion have till late years animated Government, and rendered such extraordinary exertions unnecessary. It is because those principles are forgotten—it is because I avow that I have lost all confidence whatever in the servants of the Crown in the executive Government; that I now call for this interposition, to save the country from inevitable destruction. An Honourable Gentleman, who spoke early in the debate, and in terms which I am sure did me personally great honour, (Mr. Adams,) stated the exercise of this privilege as a thing that could apply only to possible cases of the most improbable nature: he has stated an extravagant hypothesis as only sufficient to justify such a measure. For God's sake, Sir, let me not be driven to the necessity—I wish to avoid it—it is too delicate—let me not be obliged to state the hypothesis of the present hour in all its circumstances, which would appear more extravagant than his wildest imagination has suggested to him.—But, Sir, I am told, the enormity and extent of this proposition is such, that it is impossible I could myself have seen it in all its consequences—I should have suffered the House to have gone into the Committee, and have objected to the particular services. Yes, Sir, and I should have been then told that every one of my objections was ill placed; that no one of the services could be crippled, without endangering, perhaps, the object of the whole. No, Sir, it is to no service in particular I object; it is to the whole together; it is to the granting away the money of the people, till I have some reason to hope, at least, that it will not be employed in heaping fresh calamities upon us. It has been represented as if my proposition went to the total extinction of all the functions of Government; the disbanding your fleets and armies; and refusing the supplies which we have promised in our Address to the Crown. Sir, the mode I have chosen has been directly the contrary. I have not objected to the referring that part of his Majesty's Speech to a Committee, but to your *now* leaving the chair to enter into that Committee. Let this House be once satisfied that the Crown is seriously convinced of its past errors, and then, Sir, put me to the trial; see if I am not as forward as any man in this House in exerting every effort in this melancholy crisis to redeem us from our abject situation. It has been observed, that gentlemen on this side of the House have seemed to differ as to what pledge they would expect before they would concur in the supplies. Sir, every man must be determined by his own conviction. I have not presumed to think for others—I shall be determined by my own. As long as I believe the supplies will be perverted to our detriment, so long will I refuse my concurrence: when I have reason to be satisfied there is a change of system, and that we have better hopes,—that moment will I give my most cordial support and assistance. I have stated, upon a former occasion, to this House, how little interesting is any change among the servants of the Crown, whilst

whilst the system remains unshaken. Should there be an administration formed upon other principles; an administration which might embrace the talents and efficiency that are still to be found amongst us; an administration founded on the basis of the public prosperity, who, when they had one foot in the closet, remembered always to keep the other firm in the interest and affections of the people; such an administration would not be indifferent to me.—I should look up to it as the last hope of this devoted country. Whatever changes may take place, I shall watch with jealousy: if their conduct deserves my approbation, it shall receive my warmest tribute: if otherwise, I trust I shall bestow my censure with the same honest sincerity which I have used towards their predecessors. The Noble Lord has affected to establish a distinction between the different revenues of the Crown. I have never been able to see such a distinction. All monies that are levied upon the people, in whatever shape, have, in my idea, but one object,—the safety, the prosperity, the splendour of the nation, which are inseparable from the interest of the Prince upon the Throne; and, in my opinion, there is an end of the Constitution, when any such distinctions are established.

Upon the whole, Sir, the right contended for, no man has presumed to controvert; it is coeval with the constitution of Parliament, and essential to a free Government. The moment calls aloud for the exercise of it. It is effectual and it is safe. The Noble Lord, and others on that side of the House, have endeavoured to raise our apprehensions by the alarming mischiefs it would draw upon us at home and abroad. I am not apt to pledge myself—I believe this almost the first time I ever presumed to submit a proposition of mine to the consideration of this House. Will gentlemen for once give me their confidence? I will be responsible to them for the measure. I stake my credit and my character, and, if they please, my head into the bargain, that not one of all the evils foretold to us shall be the consequence of it. Walk with me this night into the Lobby, and to-morrow's sun shall not rise before all your apprehensions shall vanish into air, and the most timid amongst us be re-assured. No, Sir, not one ship shall be paid off; not one man disbanded. When the privilege of this House is opposed against the prerogative of the Crown, it is an unequal contest, and is decided in the moment. Foreign nations will then begin to recollect the resources of a free Government. When our system shall be changed here, theirs will also change towards us. Our friends, if we have any, as the Noble Lord expresses it, will dare to take confidence in us again; whilst our enemies, no longer counting upon our weakness, will once more respect our councils, which they now despise. The united strength of this exhausted country may be pointed in one last effort, and we may preserve at least the remains of our diminished empire from the complicated ruin that hangs over it.

I can-

I cannot sit down, Sir, without thanking the House for their extreme indulgence to me, and particularly the gentlemen on this side of the House, for their able and powerful support upon this occasion. As for me, whatever be the consequence of the vote of this night, I have discharged my duty—I have brought your attention to the present alarming crisis; I have shewn you a safe and an effectual remedy within your own powers; and have stood forth among the dangers of the country, as a disinterested and faithful citizen.

The House divided, Ayes 177, Noes 77. The House then went into a Committee, and voted that a supply be granted to his Majesty.

Adjourned to *December 3.*

December, 3.

After the private business was over, it was expected that Mr. Burke, according to notice he had given, would make some motion concerning the treatment of Mr. Laurens, a prisoner in the Tower; but Mr. Burke not being in the House, the Speaker was going to put the question to adjourn, when Mr. Fox said, that his Honourable friend had not departed from his intention, and that he had sent to his house to know the cause of his present absence, and expected the return of his servant every moment. Upon this, the House agreed to wait. But in less than a minute Mr. Burke came in, quite out of breath.

Mr. Burke.

He said he was extremely sorry, and begged pardon, for making the House wait. He was in the greatest confusion, but his confusion did not arise so much from a sense of delinquency on his part, as of the extraordinary and excessive indulgence of the House. The business on which he had expressed an intention to trouble them, was of very great importance, as it involved a question that concerned the justice and dignity of the nation, and might be productive of disagreeable consequences in America. From the moment he had agreed to undertake the business alluded to, he had taken extraordinary pains to get the best information, and the best advice on the subject, lest from any omission on his part, or any impropriety in the mode of proceeding, he should injure the venerable character in the Tower, whose situation he wished to relieve. He therefore had written on Sunday to an Honourable Friend, one of the Clerks of the Treasury (Sir Grey Cooper), to know if Ministers had any objection to have the Lieutenant of the Tower examined at the bar: unfortunately his Honourable friend happened to be out of town, and he did not send an answer to his letter

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till this day at about half past two o'clock. The answer, however, did not convey much information to him; for it told him only that the noble Lord in the Blue Ribbon had no objection to have the Lieutenant examined, if proper grounds should be shewn for bringing him to the bar. This only told him what he knew before, that if the noble Lord should like the motion, he would not oppose it; but it did not give him the information he wished for. On the receipt of this answer, he immediately went to a friend for advice, lest he should do something wrong, by trusting to himself; and this was what had hindered him from arriving time enough to prevent the House from being put to the trouble of waiting for him; which put him in the situation of the convict, who, being tardy in going to execution, was asked how he could keep the justice of the nation waiting for him. He still was at a loss what to do, and could not think of proceeding without taking farther advice, and therefore he was under the necessity of supplicating the House to pardon him for not now bringing on a business, which he wished for a further delay to consider more fully.

Lord North said, that the substance of the answer, which he had given directions to have sent to him, was, that there was nothing upon the face of this business, nothing peculiar in the case, that could, on the first blush of it, render it improper to have the Lieutenant of the Tower examined at the bar; and that therefore if the Honourable Member should shew such general grounds for passing his motion as ought to induce the House to do it, he certainly, for one, would not give it any opposition. Lord North.

Sir Grey Cooper gave the same explanation to the letter he had written. Sir Grey Cooper.

Nothing more was said, and the House adjourned.

December 4.

General Smith moved an instruction to the Committee appointed to enquire into the causes of the war in the Carnatic, that they enquire also into the causes and conduct of the Maratta War; and all other hostilities in which the Presidency of Bengal have engaged. He said the Maratta war was a war of vanity and ambition; a war which had given rise to that confederacy which had already brought our affairs in the East Indies into the most perilous and precarious situation; and which, if not speedily attended to, might General Smith.

might in a very short time totally put an end to the dominion of this country in India.

Mr. H.
Dundas.

Mr. *H. Dundas* (Lord Advocate) rose, he said, to request the Honourable Gentleman would withdraw his motion; because it would open too wide a field for the Committee, would protract their sittings, and prevent them from bringing the great business entrusted to their care, to as speedy a conclusion as might be wished for. The motion in itself did not appear to him as necessary by any means; for, though the Committee was a Committee of Secrecy, he might venture to say this of their proceedings, that they could not come to any conclusions with respect to the cause of the war in the Carnatic, without entering amply into that of the Maratta war: nay, they had already made a considerable progress in it, as the House would see by the next report, which he flattered himself would be ready to be laid before the House immediately after the Holidays; and if in that report, the Honourable Gentleman should not find that the Committee had sufficiently entered into the Maratta war, he would then have so little objection to the subject-matter of the present motion, that he would be most ready to approve it himself.

General
Smith.

General *Smith* said, that only one reason could induce him not to give way to the learned Lord: and that arose from this circumstance, that a fleet is shortly to sail for India; and that he thought it would be absolutely necessary for the good of our affairs in that quarter, that the fleet should carry over the news, that the House of Commons had taken up the subject of the Maratta war, and intended seriously to pursue an inquiry into it, from its first origin down to the present moment. The nature and posture of our affairs in India made such a communication absolutely necessary; for if Parliament should not interfere, and speedily too, he was convinced, that in a short time such a confederacy would arise among the country powers, as would completely overturn our empire in that part of the world.

Mr. Jen-
kinson.

Mr. *Jenkinson* (Secretary at War) said, that at first he intended to vote against the motion, but the Honourable Member had convinced him that what he had moved for was so highly proper, that now he would not give any opposition whatever to the motion.

Sir Thomas
Rumbold.

Sir *Thomas Rumbold* said, that, though the Committee to whom the consideration of the war had been referred,

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was called a Committee of *Secrecy*, their proceedings had not been so secret, but that they had found their way to public view, and were handed about with comments highly injurious to his character. It was another cause of complaint with him, that from the first moment the Committee had met, to the present hour, he had not had an opportunity to say a syllable in his own vindication: this was a hardship which was rendered the more intolerable by the comments to which he had already alluded. The Committee at their first meeting, he said, were at a loss how to proceed, or even what to begin with; and though he had advised that some of the gentlemen who had been in India might have been permitted to attend them, and give them such hints as might tend to direct them in their proceedings, and facilitate the progress of their enquiry, his advice had been disregarded; and he himself had cause to complain, that, interested as he was in the event of their enquiry, he had not been permitted to attend even to defend himself. He had much more cause to complain of the Board of Directors; for he could say of them, and, as a Member of Parliament, he had a right to speak of them as a public body; he could say of them, that they had dealt unjustly by him. The Maratta war ought undoubtedly to make a part of the enquiry of the Committee, for it was greatly connected with that of the Carnatic: and so far was he from wishing to prevent them from turning their attention to it, that he wished to enlarge the field of enquiry, and carry the retrospect back to the year 1772 or 1773, when a new mode of government was introduced in India, and introduced only by way of experiment. The Committee should not be less attentive to the conduct of the Directors at home, than of the Company's servants abroad; and if it should be found that the Directors had not attended to the advices sent to them from India, and neglected the counsels of the Company's governors, that then the Committee should be as severe upon them in their report to Parliament, as against any of the persons employed abroad by the Company.

Mr. Gregory said, he wished not to anticipate the proceedings or reports of the Committee; but this he might say in their behalf, though he was not one of their members, that they had attended so closely to the duties of the trust committed to them by the House, that they had not lost a day since they had been appointed. With respect to the Directors, he made no doubt but if they had been wrong,

Mr. Gregory.

the Committee would not spare them; for he was convinced, that in their resolutions nothing would have any influence on them but right and justice. To the labours of the Committee, he looked for the preservation of our dominions in India: if they should remain unattended to by the legislature, he was convinced they would not long be ours; but if such wholesome regulations should be adopted, as he flattered himself would be carried into a law, he then would hope and trust, that those possessions would remain very long under the dominion of Great Britain, and prove of the greatest benefit and value to the nation. The motion was agreed to.

Mr. Burke: Mr. *Burke* rose, he said, to enter upon the subject of which he had given notice relative to the conduct of Sir George Rodney and General Vaughan at St. Eustatius; but as he intended to move for a Committee, he did not think it would be necessary for him to go into a detail of the business at this moment, if the House should think proper, that a Committee should be appointed. [He was here called upon to make his motion, that the House might judge, whether it would be proper to agree to it or not.] He then read it, viz. That this House will resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to examine into the confiscation of the effects, wares, and merchandize, belonging to his Majesty's new subjects, as well as the British Subjects, on the island of St. Eustatius; and further, that the House would resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to enquire into the sale, distribution, and mode of conveyance, of a great part of the said effects, wares, and merchandize, to the islands belonging to France, and to other parts of the dominions of his Majesty's enemies.

Lord Geo. Germain. Lord *George Germain* said, that there were assumptions in the motion which could not be proved; or, at least, which ought to be proved before the House could possibly, in justice, agree to it; and this was the sale of the goods in question, either to the enemy directly, or indirectly through other hands. With respect to the confiscation, that was a matter to be discussed in another place; the legality or illegality of the measure was properly cognizable in a court of law: the parties concerned had resorted to the law of the land, and by that law the legality or illegality of the confiscation was to be ascertained. The matter being at issue, did the Honourable Gentleman wish to interfere? Or would
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the House think it just to come to any resolution respecting the transaction, *pendente lite*? If the commanders had done wrong, the injured parties would be redressed; if they had done right, the law would say so. In the present moment, it would not be proper for Parliament to come to decisions, which, *pendente lite*, must be injurious to one party or the other.

Mr. *Burke* replied, that the doctrine laid down by the Noble Lord would, if adopted, be productive of the greatest mischief to the country: for in every case, where a question of law and of state policy were united, one of the parties concerned had only to appeal to law; and then, *pendente lite*, the policy of the nation must sleep, and by proper manœuvres it might be made to sleep till doomsday; for if it was not to be wakened till the suit should be determined, it might rest almost for ever, as might suit the interest of the parties concerned never to bring the matter to issue; and then no decision having been had, and the *pendente lite* still remaining, the question of policy, according to the Noble Lord, could not, or at least ought not, to be agitated. Such reason was too ridiculous to be adopted by a House of Commons.

Mr. *Burke* here entered upon the subject. He began with ridiculing the conduct of the Admiral and General in directing their great force against the place where the least resistance was to be expected, and attacking with a small force the places that were most capable of defence, viz. St. Vincent's and St. Eustatius. The Admiral inconsiderately, and without proper information, attempted to take the former with a small force; but finding himself unequal to the task, he gave up the design, but not without shewing upon what principle he carried on the war: he had been invited by the calamity of the hurricane which he hoped had desolated St. Vincent's, to make a descent on that island; but finding the enemy stronger than he expected, he was determined to distress the poor inhabitants as much as he could; and as he was not able to carry this island, he endeavoured to distress it as much as possible, and carried away all the negroes that he could collect. The inducement which the Admiral had to invade St. Vincent's, was so repugnant to the dictates of humanity, that it was really astonishing, how the Noble Lord, who was Secretary for the American department, could think of publishing that part of a letter, which said it being probable that the hurricane and

earthquake had so weakened the island of St. Vincent's, that a British Admiral was resolved to add the horrors of war to the scourge of heaven, and to destroy by the sword those who had survived the dreadful calamity of storms and earthquakes. The publication of this letter was impolitic to the last degree; for, as we were determined at all events to carry on the present war, it should have been the care of ministers to conciliate, as much as possible, the good will of the different states with whom we are not at present at war. Our ministers should have considered two things—what force they had themselves to prosecute the war, and how they might encrease that force by alliances: as to our own force, it was well known that it was inferior to that of the enemy; ministers were therefore highly to blame in publishing a letter that would naturally make other powers not only lukewarm in our cause, but even induce them to think that we deserved our fate. It was a mistaken notion that cabinets were mere machines, moved only by interest: cabinets were composed of men, and men must have their feelings and their passions. If we had always acted upon the defensive, never provoked an enemy, or made an improper use of our own force, we should be pitied at least in our distress, and compassion might raise us friends: but the publication of the letter he had mentioned, must, he was afraid, have stifled compassion in the breasts of all the Princes of Europe, and made them think we deserved the misfortunes we suffered; and the more so, when the conduct of the French Admiral had furnished them with so striking a contrast: Sir George Rodney attacked St. Vincent's, but not being able to take the island, he carried off the negroes, in order to distress the inhabitants as much as he could; Comte de Grasse, when he took Tobago, forced all the privateers to deliver up the negroes he had taken from that island, and restored them to the inhabitants, whom he even permitted to send their produce to England, if they should please.

Our Commanders, having miscarried before St. Vincent's, directed their arms against St. Eustatius; and as they knew that no resistance of any consequence could be made, and that three stout privateers well manned might have taken the place, the British commanders, to keep up the consistency of their conduct, appeared before it with fifteen ships of the line, a proportionable number of frigates, and 3000, or at least 2500, of the best troops in the world. The force

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to resist this powerful armament consisted of a few pieces of useless artillery, and about 36 soldiers, who might be assisted with some invalids, &c. to the amount of about 24 more; in all about sixty men. The place, being incapable of defence, surrendered at discretion; but it seems that our commanders interpreted *discretion* into *destruction*, for they did not leave the conquered a shilling. Discretion, in the language of the civil law, means *arbitrium*, not *arbitrium cujuscumque pravi*, but *æqui bonique viri*, and of course was to be taken in a favourable interpretation: and therefore the moment the people laid down their arms, they were intitled to protection; for where hostilities end, there protection begins: the inhabitants ought therefore to have received protection, though, from the manner of their surrender, they could not claim a privileged protection. But what was the protection they received? Their warehouses were locked up; their books taken from them; their provisions even withheld; and they were compelled to give in an account of all their ready money, plate, jewels, &c. nor was rank, or sex, or age, spared in the general order; all were included, and all were forced to comply; nay, so great had the hardships been, which the inhabitants were forced to undergo, that Governor Meynell, who died, was supposed to have fallen a victim to the hardships he had endured. The next measure was the general proscription of all the inhabitants, by which they were ordered to quit the island; all without exception: the Dutch were banished because they were Dutch; the Americans, because they were the king's enemies: ill-fated Americans! destined to be always the objects on which the English were desirous to heap misfortunes; banished as enemies from St. Eustatius; surrendered without condition at York Town, though friends! consequently destined to suffer, either as friends or foes to Great-Britain, and to receive the deadly blow from her own hand. Among these, the case of Mr. Gouverneur was not a little remarkable; he had traded solely in dry goods, and no naval or military stores whatever had passed through his hands; but he acted upon commission from the Congress. This gentleman was seized, his property confiscated, and himself hurried on board, to be carried to England; while his wife was unable to obtain even a bed from her own house, for her husband and herself. It was true indeed, that on board they were both treated with the greatest humanity by Commodore Hotham and Captain Halliday; but the guilt of those who

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had treated them so barbarously could not be effaced by the humanity of other people! Mr. Gouverneur had no chance for his property in the hands of the Admiral and General; they viewed him in a two-fold light, and thereby were sure to catch him doubly: they considered him as a Dutchman and an Englishman; as a Dutchman, they confiscated his property; as an Englishman, they confined him as a traitor, and sent him to England, to be reserved for the justice of his country to pronounce upon him. But did not the Commanders know, that if he was a subject of this country, and even guilty of treason, his property could not be confiscated, until a jury of his country should have pronounced him guilty? It was conviction alone that produced confiscation, and gave the King a right, which a moment before he did not possess, to dispose of the convict's property. But the Commanders went to work another way; they first confiscated and made sure of the goods, before they knew whether Mr. Gouverneur should be convicted or not; and then subjected him to the hardships of four or five months close confinement in a gaol, with the meanest and most depraved malefactors.

The French inhabitants of the island of St. Eustatius were also banished, but they were indeed treated with a degree of politeness which the other nations had not experienced: the Americans our subjects, and the Dutch our natural allies, were treated with uncommon severity; whilst the French, our natural enemies, met with some respect and politeness; probably because they were the subjects of a polite nation, or rather because a retaliation was apprehended. Letters indeed had passed between Sir George Rodney and the Marquis de Bouille, which were conceived in language that equalled the highest that had been used in the wildest days of ancient chivalry; and there the Admiral bid defiance to the enemy, and told him he did not dare to retaliate: but if retaliation had not taken place, it was not to be ascribed to fear, but to the native generosity of the King of France, and the sense he entertained of public justice. Our own merchants at home had solicited relief, but they could find it only at the foot of the French throne; and the British Ministry, who could not be moved by the dictates of national justice, or the supplications of our merchants, soon gave way to a menacing letter from the Court of France, in which the French King said, that, contrary to his natural disposition, he should be obliged, in justice to his subjects, to have recourse to retaliation,

ation, if the British Ministry would not adopt a different line of conduct. Ministers then gave, and the French met with, better treatment after the menace had been conveyed to our court. It was really a matter of astonishment, that the English should act in a manner to provoke retaliation; yet so it was, that at the very time Lord Cornwallis was surrounded with forty-two pieces of heavy artillery when he could not so much as shew the *nose* of a gun to the enemy, General Arnold was employed in burning shops and houses in New-Hampshire; and this species of warfare was unknown even to General Arnold, till he joined the British Standard: but so common was that kind of war to the English, and so many acts had the enemy to retaliate upon them, that, by the most unheard-of article, Lord Cornwallis was obliged to *strengthen the flank* of his capitulation, in order to screen his troops from all reprisals under the idea of retaliation.

The poor Jews at St. Eustatius were treated in a worse manner, if possible, than all the other inhabitants; they were stripped of all their money, and eight of them put on board a ship to be carried out of the island: one of them in particular, Mr. Hohen, a venerable old gentleman, of near 70 years of age, had even his cloaths searched; and from this bit of linen (holding it up) which was sewed in the poor man's coat, were taken 36 shillings, which he had the consummate audacity to endeavour to conceal for the purpose of buying victuals! Here is the linen; and I can produce at your bar the coat from which it was taken, and the man who wore it. Mr. Hohen was treated in the most harsh manner, as were all his brethren, for this concealment. This treatment brought to his mind a story of an Irish gentleman, who, finding his wife indulging a little too freely in the follies and amusements of London, carried her over to a venerable old castle he had in Ireland: the lady's acquaintance in London were much offended at this step, and their expressions of disapprobation reached the gentleman's ear: upon this he said the world dealt whimsically by him; "for, said he, if I had ran away with another man's wife, I should have been applauded, as a fashionable man; but because I ran away with my own wife, I am censured by the world." So with the Jew—he was ill treated because he had endeavoured to carry away some of his own money.

With respect to the confiscation in general, the Commanders were without the shadow of excuse; for they had very able assistance at hand, if they had thought proper to resort

resort to it; they might have taken the opinion of his Majesty's Attorney and Solicitor General of St. Kitt's on the point of law, but no such opinion was ever called for, though Mr. Bridgewater, the Solicitor-General, had been twice with Sir George Rodney: this was a fact which should be proved at the bar, if the House would go into the inquiry.

The Commanders in Chief having determined upon the confiscation, the next thing to be thought of was the sale of the goods. A proclamation was accordingly issued, promising free ingress and regress to all purchasers, together with security that their money should not be taken from them; and that they should be at liberty to carry away the goods they should purchase: this promise of protection *eundo, redeundo, and commodando*, might not have been thought necessary from any but the conquerors of St. Eustatius. Seventeen flags of truce were ordered from various parts to that island; and the goods being set up at auction, *ad crudelem hastam*, they were mixed so as to make proper assortments; and, in particular, a kind of sail-cloth called *Maven's Stuff*, which is generally used for scudding and stay sails, and of which kind half the sails of every American vessel was made, was sold to whoever should purchase, without taking any other notice of the purchaser, than to see if he had money enough. Another difficulty, however, was still to be obviated; the privateers were like vultures, hovering round the island, waiting for the return of the purchasers, to pick up their purchase. If this difficulty had not been obviated, there would have been no purchasers: a convoy was therefore promised to them, and actually granted; and he could prove that the convoy was the *Convert* frigate, Capt. Hervey, which was appointed to see the purchasers with their commodities clear of the privateers, by which means the goods got safe into Martinique, a place which our privateers would never have suffered them to reach, if St. Eustatius had remained under the Dutch.—Another circumstance was, that the goods so sold had been disposed of 50 per cent. cheaper than the Dutch had before that sold similar articles to the French; so that, in fact, the only apparent use that the conquest of St. Eustatius appeared to be of, was, that the French and Americans had been supplied with stores, by conquerors, and at 50 per cent. cheaper than they used to get them from the Dutch. The provocation of the English, to confiscate every thing, was merely imaginary; for the Dutch sold equally to all nations: and though it was said
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in the last session of Parliament, that Sir George Rodney had applied for cordage to the Dutch, but had not been able to obtain any, the reason was, that at the time they had scarcely any on hand. This was a fact; and he would prove it by the books seized there, and by living witnesses, who would also establish these two facts, that at St. Eustatius the English always had the preference at the market; and that at the time Admiral Rodney could not obtain cordage at St. Eustatius, it was so scarce, that what little there was sold at ten per cent. dearer than at St. Kitt's.

In the glorious business of the sales were the two Commanders taken up from the beginning of the month of February to the beginning of May; a period in which the Admiral had 21 sail of the line under his command, and three thousand veteran troops at St. Eustatius, while the enemy had not six sail at Martinique. That surely was the time for offensive operations, when the enemy had not force to oppose us; that surely was our time either to recover some of our former possessions, or to take others from the enemy: but that time was lost; and the first misfortune that sprang from it was, that Sir Samuel Hood was left with an inferior fleet, to fight the superior force of De Grasse just arrived from Europe. The position of that Admiral was not such as to prevent four of the enemy's ships in Fort Royal coming out and joining De Grasse: thus the enemy were strengthened, while our force was weakened by the detention of three ships of the line at St. Eustatius. If our fleet had been reinforced by these three, the four which came out from fort Royal might have been blockaded; and in that case it is probable Comte De Grasse would have been defeated; but this was lost by St. Eustatius. A check to De Grasse would have disconcerted all the plans of the French cabinet: Tobago would not have fallen, and de Grasse would not have been left at liberty to bring upon us the dreadful disaster in the Chesapeake; another of the blessed consequences of the conquest of St. Eustatius, which, it had been said in an official dispatch, would have put an end to the American war: it might so indeed; but in the *oracular* way, by ruining us, and thereby disabling us from carrying it on. God send that the loss of Jamaica may not be the next effect of this fatal conquest! Tobago was taken under the very eye of Sir George Rodney, as De Grasse expressed himself; and the same Admiral said in his dispatches, he had several times offered the British Admiral battle, which the latter had thought proper to de-

cline. This might be called a ground of crimination : the first notice Admiral Byng had of a charge against him, was a copy of Mons. de Galissonniere's account of the action ; but as this was, in his opinion, a hardship on Admiral Byng, he would not charge Sir George Rodney from Comte de Grasse's dispatches ; but the capture of Tobago gave nevertheless an appearance of truth to the assertion of De Grasse. The capture of that island was of the greatest consequence to this nation : its cotton was the finest we got from the West Indies ; and by the loss of Tobago that article had risen from 1s. or 1s. 8d. to 3s. and 3s. 9d. It was a fact that 20,000 people in Lancashire got their bread by the manufacture of cotton. He trembled to think of the consequences that might attend the loss of Tobago, which he must ascribe to the three months delay at St. Eustatius : the Admiral stood charged with that loss, and under the hand of the very Governor of the island.

This was the sum of the charge : he wished that he might have an opportunity to enter into the proofs of it by evidence at the bar : he hoped a proper defence would be made to it, and the two Commanders in question would not sit down contented with their own self-approbation, or the support of their friends in that House. Self-acquittal was not enough : a man might say *Populus me sibilat ; at mibi plaudo, et domi nummos contemplor in arcâ* : but something was due to the public and to justice. For his part, he declared he never would abandon those whose cause he had undertaken till the matter was sifted to the bottom. The character of an accuser, it was true, was odious ; but it was so only when the accusation was brought against the innocent, the weak, the oppressed, or perhaps indigent culprit : but it was not odious to accuse guilt in stars and ribbons ; guilt rewarded and countenanced by the official and the opulent.

Sir G. Rodney.

Sir George Rodney began with saying, that when he appeared before St. Eustatius, it was for the purpose of cutting off supplies from the enemy, and with the fixed resolution not to grant any terms to the inhabitants. The Dutch, though nominally the friends of this country, had, during the course of his command in the West Indies, been the friends of our enemies ; and to punish and check both, nothing had appeared more effectual than the reduction of an island, the inhabitants of which were animated with a rooted aversion to us, and the most cordial regard for our enemies :

enemies : among those inhabitants there were many, who, while they called themselves Englishmen, were not ashamed to disgrace themselves and their country, by assisting her enemies with the means to wound her : such people deserved no favour, and to them he had resolved to shew none. But when he seized all the property on the island, it was not for his own use ; at the time he thought it would all belong to the King, and that it was his duty to see the most made of it, to carry into the public treasury : he wished not for a shilling of it ; he had no other idea at the time, but that the whole belonged of right to his country, and therefore in all he had done for the preservation of that property, it was for his country, and not for himself, that he had been acting. The Honourable Gentleman charged him with having suffered the stores, provisions, &c. to be carried into the enemy's islands, directly, or circuitously through the neutral islands ; but this was the very reverse of truth, for he had given orders, that none of the stores or provisions should be sold, but sent to his Majesty's yard at Antigua : and so strict had he been in this respect, that he was not satisfied with examining the clearance of every ship that went out ; he caused her to anchor under his stern, and had her examined by commissioned officers ; and if she had more provisions on board than were necessary for the voyage, they were always taken out. As to the charge of his remaining inactive for three months at St. Eustatius, his answer was, that he had in that time planned two expeditions, which he was just on the point of carrying into execution, the one against Curacoa, the other against Surinam, when he received advice from the commander of a convoy, by a quick-sailing vessel, that he had seen *ten*, or *twelve* French sail of the line, with about seventy transports, steering for Martinique, and that he had kept them in sight for two days. This intelligence made him renounce his designs against the Dutch settlements ; and he dispatched Sir Samuel Hood with *fifteen* sail of the line, to cruise in the tract of Martinique. Sir Samuel Hood was as good an officer as himself, and therefore there was no crime in dispatching him on that service ; and he thought *fifteen* ships able to fight *ten* or *twelve*. Unfortunately the intelligence had not been true with respect to the real numbers of the enemy ; and Sir Samuel had been driven so far to leeward, that he could not prevent the ships in Fort Royal from getting out to join De Grasse : this, however, was not a fault ; it was unavoidable.

able. His instructions however had been good; he had ordered the island to be blocked up, and that frigates should be stationed 10, 15, 20, 30, 40, 50 leagues from the shore, in the track of the enemy.

As to the ships he had detained at St. Eustatius, the Sandwich and the Triumph were at the time in so bad a condition, that he intended to send them home with the first convoy.

As soon as he had heard of the affair between Sir Samuel Hood and the Comte de Grasse, he joined the fleet, with a determined resolution to renew the action, if the enemy would give him a fair opportunity to do it. When the French landed at St. Lucia, he undoubtedly would have had the desired opportunity to come to action, if intelligence had not been conveyed to the enemy that he was approaching.—A letter had been sent to Monsieur de Grasse with that advice, and a duplicate of it was soon dispatched after: the first reached its address; the second was intercepted. The contents were, that the English were doubling Guadaloupe, and in 24 hours would be upon the French Admiral with their whole force: this put an end to what Comte de Grasse called his *feint* against St Lucia; for before day-break he embarked the troops and sailed away.

With regard to Tobago, as soon as he heard it had been attacked, he immediately sent Rear-Admiral Drake with *fix* sail of the line to relieve it: this he thought a sufficient force, as he understood that the descent had been covered only by two or three ships of the line, and the *fix* he sent against them were the best sailors, and in the best condition of any in his fleet, and were all copper-bottomed. When he found the whole of the enemy's fleet was at sea, he was obliged to watch their motions; they endeavoured to allure him to leeward, but if he had been tempted to do it, Barbadoes would have fallen: he therefore was obliged to keep to windward, still determined to succour the island.—He dispatched to Tobago three officers in three different vessels: two of them fell into the hands of the enemy; the third got to the house of a planter, and there, to his great surprize, he learned that the island had surrendered two days before, and was further told by him that 10,000 men could not retake it: at this time, the two fleets were in sight of the island. As to the charge brought by the Governor of Tobago, all he would add to what he had already said was —that

—that the guns he had sent the year before for the defence of the island had never been mounted. As to the disaster in America, he would tell the House what steps he had taken to prevent it. He had sent to the Commander in Chief at Jamaica, to send the Prince William and Torbay to America with the greatest dispatch; and he had sent also to the Commander in Chief in America, desiring he would collect his whole force, and meet him with it off the Capes of Virginia; and if he could not meet him, that he would let him know it by one of his frigates: but no answer had been sent to him or to Sir Samuel Hood, for he himself was then so ill that he was coming home. He had sent twice to the Admiral at Jamaica, and three times to the Admiral at New-York: one of his three dispatches miscarried, the vessel that carried it being forced on shore by some privateers; and from that circumstance he had learned always in future to keep copies of every dispatch, for of that he had none. If the Admiral in America had met Sir Samuel Hood near the Chesapeake, the probability was that De Grasse would have been defeated, and the surrender of Lord Cornwallis prevented:

General *Vaughan* said that it was commonly believed that he had made a great fortune by the St. Eustatius business; General
Vaughan. but he would say upon his honour, and was ready to confirm it upon oath, that neither directly nor indirectly, by fair means or by foul means, had he made a single shilling by the business. The Honourable Gentleman was mistaken as to the number of the troops he had with him at St. Eustatius: they were short one third of what he now stated them to be; nay, they scarcely amounted to 2000, consisting only of three regiments, that had left many sick behind them at St. Lucia, and four flank companies. One of the reasons for locking up the warehouses, was to prevent plundering, from which he could scarcely restrain even the troops: fire too was dreaded in a place where many disaffected people lived, and who thought themselves injured by a confiscation of their property for treason. If any bad treatment had been shewn to individuals, it was without his knowledge, orders, or approbation; and when grievances were complained of, he redressed them: to Mrs. Gouverneur he had given the house and furniture when she applied to him. It would be hard, therefore, to make him responsible for the conduct of all the persons in the town, if he had refused to punish offenders, or to redress grie-

grievances, he might have been justly charged as an accomplice; but he had never refused justice to whoever had applied for it.

As to the Jews, he had ordered them a ship to carry them to St. Thomas, at their own request; and after they had been taken to St. Kitt's without his knowledge, he had ordered their houses and property to be restored to them: and that they were well satisfied with his conduct, would appear from an address presented to him from their synagogue, expressive of their happiness, at being under the mild government of George III. He wished to lay the paper on the table, but that could not be done in point of order; and he was desired to read it as part of his speech, but he said he could not see to read it: Sir George Rodney, however, read it for him.

Upon the whole, he had acted to the best of his judgment, and for his country's good, not his own; and as he was neither a lawyer nor a merchant, if the business was to be done over again, he did not think he should do otherwise; and therefore, if he had erred, his country would excuse the fault for the intention.

Lord Ma- Lord *Mahon* thought the motion somewhat complex, and
bon. wished it divided into two motions.

Lord Geo. Lord *George Germain* rose, he said, to declare that the
Germain. subject of the motion being now under agitation in the Courts below, he must vote against it.

Lord Field- Lord *Fielding* said, if the motion was agreed to, it would
ing. detain the Admiral and General in England, when their services were wanted abroad, and therefore he should vote against it.

Mr. H. Dun- Mr. *H. Dundas* (Lord Advocate) said, he should make
dus. no objection to a motion for an enquiry into the conduct of the two Commanders; but the motion before the House professing much more, he heartily disapproved of it.

Mr. Jenkin- Mr. *Jenkinson* said, if the Honourable Gentleman (Mr.
son. Burke) would strike out of his motion the part which related to the matter of private property he should make no objection to the rest as far as it related to the point of national policy.

Mr. Burke. Mr. *Burke* divided his motion into two motions. In one he included the confiscation of goods; and in the other the sale of them, and the mode of conveying them away.

Lord North. Lord *North* said he should vote against the first, because, it bore relation to the claims now in agitation; but as to the
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the second, he should not object to it. The American war had, as usual, been introduced, and described as a war differing from all other wars. He did not see that difference. He did not see how or in what manner it differed from any of our former wars. He saw a great difference in that House. He saw the cause of the enemies espoused, and said he thought that no man with British feelings would join in the condemnation of the Honourable Admiral and General. With respect to the Admiral, he must do him the particular justice to say, that he had received a letter from him, wherein the Admiral had said he did not consider the property taken at St. Eustatius as belonging to himself, but to the Crown, and that he only had the care of it.

Mr. Fox attacked Lord North, with some warmth, for Mr Fox. saying he would not agree to the first question respecting the confiscation, and accused him of making the most *shuffling* *shuffle* that ever was attempted in the most *shuffling* times. With regard to the other assertion made by the Noble Lord, that this war did not differ from other wars, he wondered the Noble Lord should be so forgetful. Was not the management of the present war, was not the expence of the present war, and were not the events of the present war, different from all others?

Lord North replied, that, in speaking of the war, he did Lord North. not mean the event, but the principle.

Mr. Sheridan said, he was very unwilling to trouble the Mr. Sheridan. House at so late an hour; but he thought it necessary to ask one plain question, and that was, Did the Honourable Admiral (Sir George Rodney) and the Honourable General (General Vaughan) consent to the proposed enquiry or not? For if they had no objection to it, and they neither of them had hinted any thing that might lead the House to believe they had, there certainly would be no opposition to it. The Noble Lord in the blue ribbon could not possibly be so good a guardian of their honour, as those Commanders themselves. He therefore desired to know if the Honourable Admiral and General had any dislike to the enquiry, and if neither of them gave any answer, he should take it for granted that they had not.

Mr. Burke rose again upon the alteration desired by Lord Mr. Burke. Mahon, and replied to the conclusion of Lord North's Speech. With indignation he declared he wondered how the noble Lord dared to talk of British feelings. He! (said Mr. Burke) He! dare talk of British feelings! He! that has ruined the British

British Empire, and wasted its Blood and Treasure ! He said, he had British feelings, but he would nevertheless take the part of an enemy when they appeared to him to be oppressed. If, for instance, an enemy should be murdered after surrendering himself, he would stand forward as the prosecutor of his murderer : if, for instance, an Enemy should have his property seized after capitulating, he should find an advocate in him : and if, for instance, an Enemy complained of the Minister's having broke the faith of government with regard to him, he should find an advocate in him, and, he trusted, in the British House of Commons. With respect to the letter which the Noble Lord had received from the Hon. Admiral, acquainting him that the capture of St. Eustatia was a very rich one, and that it all, every farthing of it, was the property of the Crown ; he could not but admire, that such a Minister as we had, who was an *old Minister*, and a *full-grown Minister*, should come to the House, and tell them, that he had received a letter from the Admiral, informing him that every thing at St. Eustatia was the property of the Crown, in answer to the proposed inquiry. From such conduct the Minister might naturally be concluded a very young man, with a large napkin under his chin. The Letter he thought more proper to have been sent to the Attorney-General ; but he supposed the Noble Lord, who acted on the occasion as a lawyer, and sent word to the Admiral, that the property was all his, as the Attorney-General would have done, had taken a fee for his advice.

With regard to the question, the Noble Lord might do as he pleased with it. He might cut it, and mangle it, just as he pleased; but though he should cut it into a thousand pieces, if he got but any part of it, it would be sufficient for him. But the Noble Lord had divided his motion in a manner that put him in mind of a murderer, who having amputated all the limbs of a child, threw them different ways, in order that the father might be employed in picking them up, instead of pursuing the murderer.

Lord
North.

Lord North said, that, in speaking of the letter he received from the Hon. Admiral, he meant no more than to substantiate or confirm the fact, that the Admiral had sent him such a letter.

Mr. Burke.

Mr. Burke rose again, and called for the inquiry. He had a body of evidence to adduce at the bar, and would go into the matter that night, or whenever the House should please. He desired the House would suffer the inquiry to be gone into, and

and he would pledge himself that he would support every thing he had said.

Mr. Byng called the attention of the House to a very important object. He did not rise so much to speak to the motion, as to state the infringement made, year after year, upon the privilege of Parliament, and the privilege of the Constitution. Last year, he said, the House made no objection to the appointment of a Committee to inquire *into the cause of the Malbratta war, although Sir Thomas Rumbold was at that very time* under a prosecution of the Court of King's Bench. But, now, this mode is said to be improper, and the inquiry is objected to, because one or two suits are depending in the Court of King's Bench, for the recovery of property taken at St. Eustatius. Mr. Byng.

Colonel Barre said, that at so late an hour he would not trouble the House by going at large into the question. All he wanted was to remove every objection it was liable to, and to make it meet the approbation of all parties. He would therefore, with the leave of the Honourable Gentleman who originally made the motion, restore the two motions to one with some alteration. He moved, that this House will resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to examine into the confiscation of the goods and merchandize as found in the Island of St. Eustatius, excepting such goods and merchandize as are now claimed in any Court of Law or Equity. Col. Barre.

Upon this motion the House (at twelve o'clock) divided, for it 89, against it 163.

December 5.

The House went into a Committee of supply, and Mr. Ord took his seat at the table.

Lord Lisburne rose and moved, that 100,000 men be granted for the sea service, including 21,721 marines, for the year 1782. It was a matter of supply so obviously necessary and important, that he would not take up their time in saying any thing to enforce his motion. Lord Lisburne.

Mr. Hufferd said it was common on such a day as that, and it was expected that the Admiralty should give the House some information respecting the state, condition, and prospects of the Navy. Such a proposition as the present was not to be made in a loose, negligent manner; all the hopes of this country depended on the Navy, and the House must know something of its management, and of its state. It Mr. Hufferd.

was common for the Admiralty to give an account to Parliament of the ships that were now in commission, and what were intended to be added, and what alterations there were in the Navy in general.

Lord Liffburne.

Lord Liffburne then stated, that the number of seamen and marines voted by Parliament last year was 90,000 : that the number really employed in the course of the year was 118,000 : that we had, in the course of the last year, 98 ships in commission ; but that number was now diminished, for within something more than a year 17 ships of the line had been disabled, and six more totally lost in the late hurricanes, and by the accidents of war and sea : that, upon account of these losses, the number of ships now in commission was 92 only ; so that there were six ships fewer this year than the last. But there were now upon the stocks building, and would be launched in the course of the year, and in the yards repairing, at least 14 ships. The whole of the ships now in commission, great and small, amounted to 405 in number. To the marines five new companies had been added, making the whole 151 companies. He could only add to this, that the greatest exertions had been made, and that the Admiralty had done every thing in their power, to increase and extend the Navy of Great-Britain in the present alarming and critical situation. The motion of the present day would prove their anxiety for the naval service. In no former year of the British history had so many as 100,000 seamen been voted by Parliament. This was a greater number than was now actually in the service ; but they were anxious to procure men, and to bend all their endeavours to this particular point. He trusted the Committee would agree to the proposed motion.

Mr. Hussy.

Mr. Hussy rose again, and said, that it had been his intention for a considerable time to move on this day, that 110,000 seamen should be granted for the naval service of the current year ; and he had made this resolution on the most deliberate opinion, and also on the belief that his Majesty's Ministers meant to move for no more than 90,000 seamen. But when he found that they designed to move for 100,000, he owned that, for a short time, he was brought in his own mind to consent to give over the resolution of moving for the addition ; but, in conversing with his friends, and stating to them the reasons on which he wished to strengthen the hands of Government with this augmentation, they were unanimously of opinion, that he ought to perse-

were in his intension; for it was an aid absolutely necessary to the welfare and the success of our operations. By this advice he was induced to remain in his resolution; and he would now propose, as an amendment to the motion, that 110,000 seamen and marines should be voted for the service of the current year. It was his sincere belief that Ministry had not made all the exertions which they had it in their power to make; and the Admiralty were criminal in not having made the exertions which were in their power. In the course of the present summer, he had made it his business to look into the opportunities, and into the efforts, of the naval department. In Hampshire he had seen several private yards, where it was in the power of his Majesty's Ministers to procure ships of the line. At Chapel, a little place near Southampton, where a ship of 64, and two of 44, were building, the master of the dock-yard said he was capable of building a 70 or a 74, and had done so about 25 years ago. In the royal yard at Portsmouth, he was astonished to see the negligence and inactivity that prevailed: all was quiet, listless, and unemployed, where he expected bustle, hurry, and fulness of business: there was no appearance of our being at war with all the great maritime powers of Europe. There were six ships; four of them were occupied by the *Raisonable*, the *Trident*, the *Vengeance*, and the *Swallow*: out of the fifth the *Warrior* was launched a few days ago; and in the 6th lay the rotten timbers of the *St. George*. He had no intelligence there but what any other man might have had as easily as he; he had given his name, and viewed the dock-yards, and he believed that there might be more shipping built there. At Bristol, he said, the master of a dock-yard said he could build a line-of-battle ship. There were many other private yards in the kingdom, where the Admiralty might build ships, and where they ought to have done so. With respect to manning the Navy, much greater exertions might have been made for that purpose. It was always his idea, that much benefit might be derived from having a number of landmen employed on board his Majesty's ships. He had not the benefit of a seaman's education, nor did he know what was the necessary time for qualifying a man as an able seaman; but he was inclined to think, that, in the course of only one twelvemonth, young landmen, if employed afloat, might be rendered ordinary seamen, and, in the course of a twelvemonth, an ordinary seaman might be made an able seaman. The benefit

of having constantly a number of landmen on board would, therefore, be great; and it was his sincere wish that such a plan was adopted as an experiment at least. He adverted to an argument made use of in a former year by a Vice-Admiral (Sir Hugh Palliser); that, if it had not been for a combination formed in the dock-yards some time ago, our Navy would have been stronger by the addition of at least one half more ships. This evidently implied, that, if they had the ships, they could procure the men; for without men the ships could not strengthen the Navy. He wished to know why the marines were not suffered to go aloft, as they were in the last war; and why regiments of foot were not occasionally or constantly sent on board. It would be a wise method of recruiting the service. The Admiralty were criminal, were inexcusable, for not making greater exertions, and building ships, as they might have done in the private yards. The motion which he was going to make would oblige the Minister to apply 520,000*l.* more to the Navy service than he was obliged to do by the proposed vote. In the one way the sum to be raised was 5,200,000*l.* in the other the sum was 5,720,000*l.* Perhaps the Noble Lord in the blue ribbon would make it now, as before, a question of finance. Great exertions must be made at sea, or the country would be lost; and every Gentleman must feel that great exertions could not be made without great and adequate means. He meant therefore, by his amendment, to impound the 520,000*l.* which the Noble Lord well knew was the real value of his amendment, and fix it for the use of the Navy. It would at least serve to pay off so much of the Navy debt, if it would not answer for better purposes, and be employed in a manner more useful; and he would do it the rather now, because he knew, when other services came to be provided for, he should be resisted. Perhaps the Noble Lord would say, "Why pinch the other services? The army must be provided for: surely, you would not stint and starve that service!" He would answer the Noble Lord fairly, it was what he wished to do, and he was sure he was serving his country by it. The great error of the war had been Administration had been too fond of the Army, and paid too little regard to the Navy. The American war had been the cause of this error, and that House had but too cheerfully and blindly co-operated with the views, and wishes, and projects of Administration, mad, and weak, and ill-judged as those views, and wishes, and projects had been. If

America

America was to be coerced, the only probable mode of coercing her would have been by a powerful Navy. Had we preserved the empire of the seas, France would not have ventured to have interfered, and we need not to have cared for all the world; we should have been at peace at this time, instead of the deplorable situation in which we now stood. He had always imagined that a great and gallant Admiral, lately no more, but whose memory would ever be revered by his country, had left a large fleet to his successors, when he quitted the presidency of the Admiralty-Board; but he had heard gentlemen assert since, that he left no fleet at all, for his ships were all rotten. If they were, what had his successors been about, that they had not got more in their stead in so many years time? The Noble Lord had said, we had now 92 ships in Commission, and last year we had 98; he expected to hear this unsatisfactory mystery cleared up. The Honourable Gentleman concluded with moving, as an amendment, that the motion stand 110,000, instead of 100,000.

Sir George Yonge seconded the amendment, and assigned his reasons for so doing: he accused the Admiralty of having made very little use of the vast supplies that had been entrusted to their hands; and he expressed his opinion, that, if the money voted for the Navy, during the last ten years, had been properly managed and expended, we might now have nearly as many new-built ships as we have new and old together.

Sir George
Yonge.

Lord Mulgrave differed with Mr. Huxley in respect to his manner of training seamen. Seamen, he said, were not to be made in one, or two, or three years; nay, many thousands of ordinary seamen could never be made able seamen. They, and the landmen, might be very useful indeed on board; but no officer would trust to them as they would to a seamen. Not a few months cruise, nor any thing like it would even make them ordinary seamen: it required penury, as well as understanding; and, unless men were early in life into the service, they seldom reached to a proficiency. Rude and barbarous as the seamen were generally supposed to be, it was not every man who could in a length of time become an able seaman. To be so ranked required much greater abilities than the Honourable Gentleman seemed to be aware of. It was not an easy thing to make a landman a seaman; but landmen were still better, and there were always a proportion on board. But the

the greatest objection that he had to this mode of succession was, that it tended to split and divide ships companies, to take them away, when disciplined, from the officers to whom they were endeared, and from the messmates with whom they were happy. As to the exertions which the Honourable Gentleman recommended, the Admiralty had nothing more at heart than to see every thing done that could promote the public service; and no owners of private yards would they suffer to remain idle, that would undertake to build ships, and could perform their contracts. The Honourable Gentleman seemed to think otherwise from what he had heard and seen at two or three of the sea-ports; but, if he had the experience of the Admiralty, he would not credit all he heard: for he could assure him, that many offers had been made to the board for building ships; sometimes in places where they could not be launched, and sometimes by persons who had it not in their power to perform their contract. An instance of this had lately occurred, where a man had applied to the Board for a contract, and was refused because he was not able to perform what he was willing enough to promise, and because the Board were actually suing him on his penalty, for not having fulfilled his last contract. He wanted, however, to secure a second contract, and, if the Board had gratified him, the public would be deluded in their expectations from seeing two ships building at once; for though two might be on the slips, God only knew when even one of them would be launched. The Honourable Member had mentioned the slips at Portsmouth, and said that in the yard he had not seen any hurry or bustle: he hoped that this might have arisen from the regularity and order observed in the yard, by which every man was employed in his own particular department; bustle and confusion were prevented, when every man knew his task, and was attentive to his duty. Though the Honourable Member had not seen any work performing on the ships on the slips, it did not follow that a great deal of work was not going forward. Besides, in time of war, very few ships of the line were built in the equipping dock-yards, then of those yards having full employment in refitting, repairing, &c. such ships as were from time to time brought there for those purposes. At Chatham, line-of-battle ships were built somewhat more expeditiously; but neither there, nor indeed in any of the King's yards, were they built during time of war very fast; and that for this reason—when shipant-
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ing repairs which would take up but a few months to complete, were brought in, the men were always set to work upon them immediately, in order to get them to sea again as soon as possible. The private ship-builders yards were the places where most of our ships were built during the time of war. It was usual, particularly, since the coopers came in fashion, to carry on the repairs of the large ships at Spithead, because much time might be lost in waiting for winds and tides to carry them to and from Portsmouth, and they were therefore never carried up so far, except when it was absolutely necessary to do so; and though the calm and quiet, which the Honourable Member had seen in the dock-yard, might have proceeded from order and regularity, it might also have, in a great measure, arisen from this circumstance, that many of the shipwrights were at work at the time on the largest ships afloat at Spithead.

His Lordship assured the Hon. Gentleman, that the Admiralty were not disposed to omit availing themselves of every opportunity to have ships built, wherever such places could be found; and, as a proof of this, he would acquaint him with a circumstance which had very lately occurred. Orders had been brought over from Ostend, for building large vessels in the private yards in the river, for the Emperor's India Company: by large vessels he meant ships of 11 and 1200 tons. The Admiralty heard of the order, and immediately insisted that the masters of the yards should not undertake to execute them. Application was then made to the Imperial Minister at our court, to request that he would interfere, and try to persuade the Admiralty to withdraw their opposition: but his Excellency was told by the Board, that they could not possibly desist from their opposition; because, in the present exigency of our affairs, we stood in need of every hand that could drive a nail, and therefore could not, for the present, consent that our shipwrights should work for any but ourselves; and the people concerned were given to understand, that, if the laws at present in being were not sufficient to restrain them from building for foreigners at this time, application would be made to the Legislature for a law that should do it effectually. With regard to the combination alluded to by the Honourable Gentleman, he really knew not correctly what he meant. If it was the task-work plan, he could only say, that the profession he had the honour to belong to were divided in opinion upon the matter; some of the ablest men in the service

think.

thinking it a happy circumstance that the plan was stopped as it was, and others maintaining that it was the wisest plan that ever was suggested. His Lordship added, the Navy at present was greater than any Navy this country had seen; and begged the Committee to recollect, that upwards of one hundred ships of the line had been put in commission since the year 1776. He concluded his speech with observing, that every possible exertion had been made, both by the Admiralty-Board and the Navy-Board, to strengthen the Navy, and add to the number of ships in commission; and that in the course of the year it would be much stronger than it was at present.

Mr. Hussey. Mr. *Hussey*, in reply, said that the noble Lord had given a most melancholy picture of our situation. What! would the Noble Lord undertake to assert, that this country could not make greater exertions than she had done? How were we to reinstate ourselves? To what use had so many millions been voted for the Navy service? Did the Noble Lord plead the loss of the six ships, and the damage done to the other seventeen, as the cause that was to satisfy the Committee, why our Navy was less numerous by six ships this year than it was the last year? Did the Noble Lord think, it was not the duty of the Admiralty to provide against the ordinary and incidental calamities of the service? Did the Admiralty suppose, we were to lose none of our ships in such a war as the present? For his part, he expected that we should have lost many more. It was wonderful we had not. Providence had been extremely kind to us, or we must have experienced much greater losses; and the Admiralty, considering what immense sums they had been entrusted with, ought to have given us more ships, and made more vigorous efforts. Ministers were highly criminal for having lost both our trade and part of our possessions; they had sacrificed both to the American war, and they ought to answer for it! He begged pardon for being so warm, but he spoke as he felt; and he could not help being indignant on hearing, that, notwithstanding the boast of the First Lord of the Admiralty, of his having a superior Navy to the House of Bourbon, we now not only had a Navy inferior to theirs, but were told by a Lord of that Board, that there was no hope of our being able to have one that was superior. He should persist therefore in his amendment, and they ought to thank him for it, and accept it joyfully. He wished to strengthen the hands of Government; and if they refused the aid, there must be some secret, dark cause.

Admiral Keppel so far agreed with the Noble Lord, that it was not an easy thing to make able seamen out of landmen, but it was a most advantageous thing to have them on board, for they came up slowly and gradually to be most serviceable hands. It undoubtedly required that men should go young into the service to become able seamen. As to splitting ships companies, and tearing from an officer the men in whom he had confidence, and who had confidence in him, and in one another, it was a thing that he would never do: he would as soon put his hand into the pocket of an officer, and rob him of his gold, as he would of the men he had bred up. This was the fault of the present Board. It was this which had divided and distracted the Navy; which had driven men into the service of foreign countries, and had dispirited those that remained. It was a thing which had never been practised in former days; in the days of that great and gallant man, whom it was the fashion now to revile, but who was the father of the English Navy, Sir Edward Hawke. It had been said, that in his Administration our fleet was not so great as it is now. He denied the fact—it was greater. He sat with him at the Board—he knew his conduct, both in his civil and military capacity. He had left behind him a name unrivalled in the maritime records of his country. There were, indeed, about twenty bad ships; but it was a singular thing, that of those ships which were appointed to parade before his Majesty, the greater part were the ships of Sir Edward Hawke. They remained staunch and true to their country, like the old English oak of which they were made. Lord Sandwich's foreign men of war were not made for British service. He avowed that the Admiralty had not exerted themselves in procuring ships to be built. They had opportunities, and they had suffered them to escape. Perhaps it was not yet too late; but they studied and practised the most incompetent and unadvised plan, and they had by that means suffered the British Navy to decay; and he must assert, though he did it without despondency, that we had better lye down at once than go on without a system. It was the most melancholy part of our situation, that the Navy which we did possess was not directed to an object.

Lord *Mulgrave* rose again to say, that he had never accused Sir Edward Hawke of being a bad officer. He thought him one of the greatest and most gallant seamen that ever distinguished this or any country. He loved and revered

his memory—and he revered it so much, that he could not sit and hear him degraded by false praise. He was a seaman so great—so good, that he was not formed for descending to the detail of the civil duties of office. He made no scruple to declare that he never regarded him as a great Naval Minister. There was one part of his character which rendered him as high as any other, and that was, that he had the virtue to retire from a situation, for which he found his abilities were not calculated. With regard to what the Honourable Gentleman who moved the amendment had said, as to the Admiralty-Board being bound to look for losses, and provide against them, it was true, and they had done so. But ships did not grow out of losses, nor were they to be built in a day.

*Sir Hugh
Palliser.*

Sir *Hugh Palliser* gave an account of the combination which took place in the yards in 1773, by which many of the ablest hands were lost to this country, and the Admiralty prevented from building so many ships as they otherwise would have done. He said, that this combination had been created by the wicked artifices of one Lee, a well-known agent of Congress, who had succeeded in his traitorous purposes, and by giving the workmen money, and supporting them while they absented themselves from the King's yards, got them over so entirely to his interest, that Government was under the necessity of abandoning their plan. Sir Hugh also mentioned the affair of John the Painter, and his setting fire to Portsmouth yard, and the city of Bristol. He further said, that a variety of difficulties had been thrown in the way of the present Board of Admiralty.

*Mr. Thomas
Townshend.*

Mr. *Thomas Townshend* insisted that the amendment was exceedingly necessary—not a syllable had been said against it. It would force Ministers to do their duty, and apply the additional 500,000*l.* to the service of the Navy, and perhaps spare it from the more unconstitutional service of the army. Not a syllable, he said, had been advanced against it. All the gentlemen, who had spoken on the other side, had endeavoured rather to divert the attention of the House, than to answer the strong arguments of Mr. Hufsey. He adverted with pointed irony to what had fallen from Lord Mulgrave. To be sure, says he, if I were to venture to set up an opinion upon a maritime question, I should be corrected for my presumption—I should be told that I was as ignorant of every thing that respected the Navy of England as Lord Hawke.—Lord Hawke's education, it seems, did

did not fit him for naval affairs, and his opinion was not to be held respectable. Indeed, he confessed the education of Lord Hawke and of Lord Sandwich were very different; and if Lord Sandwich was a proper man to conduct the naval affairs of England, Lord Hawke must have been the most unfit person upon earth, for no two characters were ever more opposite to each other.

He ridiculed the idea of a new distinction of character, and said, he did not understand what was the meaning of the phrase, *a great Naval Minister*, set up in opposition to the character of a great, and experienced sea-officer. He laughed also at the mention of John the Painter, and all that had been said of a Mr. Lee or Mr. Lind, or Mr. Somebody, he could not tell who, that had been mentioned as the author of a combination fatal to the interests of this country; and said, if the facts were so, more shame for Administration: there were laws in being, equal to the punishment of such offenders, and they ought to have been exerted. Would they dare to come forward, and give as an excuse for the wretched impotence and fallen state of the British Marine, that they were opposed in their measures, and all the naval operations of the country were stopped and defeated by a despicable Mr. Lee! With all the laws of England—with all the authority of Government at their service—would they venture to say that they were unable to prevent or to overcome a little paltry combination, begun and supported by a single individual! It was a height of impudence to which he did not think that ever the present Admiralty could have reached. The Honourable Gentleman reprobated all their mean subterfuges—they were too low for credulity. But such had been all along the arts of those state criminals who had ruined their country.

Lord North said, that if no men were to be employed but those who should be voted, he could have no objection to vote for the amendment: but the Honourable Member who had proposed it knew very well, that let the number voted be what it might, as many men would be employed as could be found. During the course of the last war, no more than 70,000 had been voted at one time, and yet the number employed during that war had been from 82 to 86,000; last year 90,000 had been voted, and 99,845 had been employed: so that, in fact, the number voted was never the number employed.

The question was therefore a mere matter of finance, and

it only went to this—whether Parliament should grant 5,200,000l. or 5,720,000l. specifically for the maintenance of 110,000 men. This would certainly make a difference of 520,000l. in the ways and means of the year; and he did not see why the executive power should be tied down to expend that specific sum in the naval department, even though circumstances should occur, which might make it more proper to expend that sum in the military department: both services were undoubtedly useful, and sometimes one would be useless without the other. It was an amendment not likely to add 10,000 seamen to our Navy, but an amendment, which, to use the Honourable Gentleman's particular and remarkable expression, an expression well adapted to the purpose, tended to *impound* five hundred thousand pounds and upwards for the use of the Navy. Before the Committee acceded to this proposition, he begged leave to call to their consideration the stage of public business at which they stood, the general usage of Parliament in that stage, the violent alteration of it now proposed, and the necessity, wisdom, and expediency of altering it so violently in the present crisis. The Committee were now called on to grant the first supply, the supply of the Navy, which had always and very deservedly been the favourite service of the nation. The fact was, the Admiralty did, the Admiralty ought, and the Admiralty would be criminal to a great and very high degree, if they did not get every seaman that was to be had. It was well known by that House, that the custom always was to move for less than would be employed. It was a wise practice, since it did not give any money to that particular department which would lie useless. Why then was it necessary to move for more now? and why cut the Navy to any precise *scantling*? and especially as the Noble Lord had himself moved for more than was requisite to man the present list of the Navy. Some Gentlemen might be afraid that great augmentations were to take place in the army, and that consequently the American war was to be pursued with redoubled vigour. The largeness of the supply called for this day, might lull their apprehensions on that head; for the motion without the amendment was still for 10,000 seamen more than were called for last year, and consequently the sum of 520,000l. would be employed in the naval department more than last year. The question therefore was, which side should be more liberal to the Crown; one side was very liberal indeed,

in voting 100,000; the other excessively and unnecessarily liberal, in voting 110,000; and yet, let which-ever vote take place, the Admiralty would employ all the hands they could get.

Colonel *Barré* begged pardon for being obliged to ask the Noble Lord of the Admiralty-Board what was the particular statement of the force of this year, and what the difference between it and the force of the last. He asked the question, because, through an accident, he was not in the House when Lord Lisburne had opened the business.

Lord *Mulgrave* repeated and explained the statement. We were but six ships less than last year; so that seventeen ships had been added to the navy in little less than a year from March 1780. As to the fourteen ships that he had mentioned, something very extraordinary must happen to prevent their being added to the Navy, as four of them were ships now under repair, and nearly finished, and the other ten, new ships, almost ready for launching: three of these ten new ships were those presented to Government by the East-India Company. Possibly, said Lord *Mulgrave*, more may be got ready, but he did not chuse to overstate the matter. If there were more, so much the better for the public; and if there were not, he should not hereafter be chargeable with having promised what was not performed. He did, in the mean time, assure the Committee, that both the Admiralty and the Navy Board would make every exertion in their power, for the necessity was to the full as obvious to them as it could be to the Committee,

Colonel *Barré* then said, that with a diminished fleet, a fleet declared to be inferior to that of the enemy, and declared to be incapable of rising superior, or even equal to it, the Ministers refused the generous proffers of Gentlemen on that side of the House, to strengthen their hands, and enable them to encrease the Navy. It evidently shewed that they were still determined to pursue their plan of giving a preference to the army.

If the motion had been merely to entrust so much more money to the hands of those who had shewed themselves such improvident and careless stewards already, he should have opposed it; but the motion of his Honourable friend, who he would venture to pronounce as honest a man as any within those walls, having been supported by such strong arguments, and proved to have a good and an important tendency, he certainly would vote for it; and if the Committee

mittee meant to act openly, and honestly, in order effectually to convince the public that their address to the Throne was not empty adulation, but that they meant to give the Crown real, substantial, constitutional support, they would do the same. With respect to the estimates of the army, he said he had just perused them, in order to see how the question of the American war, to which a learned Lord had said Ministers must soon speak out, would be brought forward by those estimates. He declared that they burnt his hand while he held them, as he saw the nation was again to pay for regiments, many of which, were they let into the gallery, would not incommode the company then present in that part of the House. The Colonel said, it was another paper army that the public were to be taxed for. He answered Lord North's argument about the precedent of voting a certain number of seamen and marines, and asserted, that, in the Noble Lord's administration, the precedent insisted on had been frequently abandoned.

He lamented our misfortunes; he attributed them to our disregard of our naval force; he hoped that was now at an end: he pretended to no scientific knowledge, yet, from the observations that a man of common sense could make, he could conceive nothing less than the most criminal negligence of the national welfare in the conduct of the marine department; nay, the very words that the Noble Lord (Lord Mulgrave) let fall in the course of the debate, convinced him of this negligence. The Noble Lord had mentioned some consultations of the Admiralty, in order to thwart a design of the Emperor of Germany to build ships in this kingdom. —To thwart! Then it seemed, ships might have been built for foreign service; Why not for our own? Was this a proof that the exertions of the Admiralty have been at the height?—Quite the contrary. The motion of his Honourable friend was generous—it was manly—it sprung from the purest of motives. Ministry, if they persisted in rejecting it, must give this sentiment to their country, that they rejected the opportunity that was offered of restoring the Royal Navy to its wanted grandeur.

Mr. Byng.

Mr. Byng denied the doctrine that had been laid down by Lord Mulgrave on a former day, that this country must be inferior to that of the House of Bourbon, whenever their powers applied all their resources to the equipment of a navy. He denied its having been inferior in the reigns of King William and Queen Anne, and said, that history re-
futed

futed the doctrine. The British fleet was superior to the enemy at the famous battle of La Hogue—it was upon various occasions at that time superior to the enemy; and it might be, as it ought to be, superior to them now. We ought to imitate upon this occasion the conduct of our enemies in the extraordinary exertions which they made to recruit their navy in 1704. Such a national exertion ought in the present moment to be made; and then, if we failed of having a superior fleet, we might sit down with the desponding doctrine of the Admiralty, that our efforts were in vain.

General *Smith* said, he must take credit to himself for having been the humble means of giving to his country half as many line-of-battle ships, as his Majesty's Ministers intended to give in the course of the year. It was he who moved in the India House for building three ships for Government. It was certainly a great boast for a private man to make; and the proceedings of the present day shewed how much the nation was indebted to the East India Company for their generous and munificent present. Gen. *Smith*.

Mr. *Penton* begged the Honourable Gentleman to accept of his warm thanks for the share which he had had in bringing about the favour. Every citizen of this country was under obligation to him; but he said, that, had not the East India Company acted in a manner so extraordinarily and so nobly generous, this country would have had the same number of new ships, as those builders in whose yards the three ships given by the India Company were built, would have been employed by the Admiralty. He said, that the Admiralty had made every possible exertion, and had embraced every opportunity of increasing the number of our ships. He wished that any gentleman could point out a better mode for increasing the strength of the Navy than had yet been observed; and ventured to assert that the Board of Admiralty would instantly adopt it. Mr. *Penton*.

General *Conway* spoke also very warmly, and said, if it was true that this kingdom was inferior, and must be inferior, to France, in her Navy, it was all over with us indeed, and we must make peace at any rate; but he did not believe the fact. He doubted the correctness of the Noble Lord's historical quotations relative to the inferiority of our Marine to that of the House of Bourbon in the reigns of King William and Queen Anne; and said, if it were true, that we could not make a greater exertion, and that building seven ships in a year was the utmost possible extent of our efforts, General
Conway.

efforts, for God's sake make peace directly, ask it on any terms, and conclude it before more blood and treasure is wasted! But he believed it was nothing but the mismanagement or the incapacity of Ministers, that made our fleet inferior, and that, if it was in abler hands, it would yet rise to its wonted splendour.

Mr. Webb. Mr. Webb knew that it was only the negligence or incapacity of the Ministers that we had to blame. The Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Penton) had desired any gentleman to point out how the Admiralty could have increased their efforts. He would tell that Honourable Gentleman, and the House, and the Country. There were many private yards capable of building line-of-battle ships, and which they might have employed through the whole of the present war. In the river there were four capital yards, each of them capable of building four ships of the line at one time: the yards of Mr. Wells, Mr. Barnard, Mr. Perry, and Mr. Randall. They had built for the Company; and three of them were now building the ships of the line presented to Government. He had spoken to Mr. Wells (who was the particular friend of Lord Sandwich) on the subject, and had asked him why he did not build for Government? Mr. Wells said, that, even in the present alarming and critical moment, Government would not pay him. They did not, and would not, give him encouragement. He averred that they might have had sixteen ships of the line constantly in these slips; and there were many more at the outports. At Ipswich they might have built ships; and there was no scarcity of men, if there were ships. The East Indiamen had gone round to Spithead well and fully manned, and they could have got many more. This he knew from his own knowledge; for he had been principally engaged in fitting them out. Many more able hands applied to him for employment than he wanted. This was a fact. Why then did the Admiralty say that our Navy must be inferior, without profiting from the opportunities which they really enjoyed? It was an ill-timed, and an ill-judged parsimony, at such a crisis as the present, to forego this opportunity, and the Admiralty ought to answer it to their country.

Lord Mulgrave.

Lord Mulgrave observed, that the Honourable Gentleman had said Mr. Wells was a particular friend of the First Lord of the Admiralty: so far, then, he proved that the Noble Lord was disinterested, and had not yielded that to friendship

ship or to private regard which would have been an improper bargain with a stranger. The fact was, as he understood it, Mr. Wells wanted to charge a greater price than other builders were satisfied with receiving. Had his demand been complied with, the price would have been universally raised on the public, and the difference of the expence would have been enormous. As the twelve Indiamen lately built were finished, the yards would want work; and he had no doubt, unless Mr. Wells was so rich as to give up all further thoughts of business, his stomach would come to, and he would again contract with Government. His Lordship said further, - he was very glad to hear that seamen were plenty, and the Indiamen manned; for then he hoped they would not be brought round to Portsmouth by the lumpers, and that their Captains would not continue the practice of stealing the men from his Majesty's ships, trepanning them, intoxicating, and concealing them in the infamous manner that they had done frequently.

His Lordship repeated his assertion, that the Navy of Great Britain was now greater than ever; that we had more ships in commission than we had all last war, when we had the aid of America. He insisted upon it, in reply to Mr. Byng, that the historical facts stood as he had stated them in a former debate. At the siege of Barcelona, and the battle of Malaga, there was a Dutch squadron joined to ours. In the success at La Hogue, the Dutch were with us. In Lord Torrington's affair off Beachy Head, the Dutch were also joined with us; but where we stood alone, the House of Bourbon were our superiors in point of number. In Bantry Bay, they were 28 ships, or thereabouts, to our 21; and he asserted again, and averred, that whenever the French bent all their endeavours, and employed their resources to the equipment of a Navy, they must be superior to us. Lord Mulgrave repeated it, that the Navy-Board did their duty, and that every exertion possible had been made to build with the utmost expedition.

Colonel *Barre* asked, if, because Mr. Wells was exorbitant, the Admiralty were prevented from building in the other three yards? Might they not have built 12 ships at a time?

Lord *Mulgrave* said he had been at sea, and could not tell the reason. He was unacquainted with the late proceedings of the Admiralty.

Mr. *Bamber Gascoigne* said, that the yards in the river were

were chiefly occupied in building small ships; and they preferred them, because they paid better:—he declared, that there was not a builder's yard on the bank of the Thames, who was willing to enter into a contract to build ships for Government, that was not employed in that service. Mr. Gascoigne stated, that the number of ships of the line now building were thirty-two, the greatest part of which would be ready to be launched on or before the middle of the year 1783, and all of them be compleat for the service of 1784. But the reason why the builders in the Thames were averse from contracting with Government was, that the river was so favourable for building merchant-ships:—when they built East or West Indiamen, they had regularly the benefit of dockage, of which they were entirely deprived when they built for Government, because the King's ships were always docked, cleaned, and repaired, in the royal yards. What the Admiralty could do, they had done; but the business of making contracts belonged to the Navy-Board.

Mr. Pulteney spoke with great warmth on this point. What! was this a moment, when the very existence of the nation was at stake, to prevent the building of 16 ships every eighteen months, for the paltry saving of a few thousand pounds! He reprobated the idea of the Admiralty-Board throwing the blame on the Navy-Board, and so shifting it off their own shoulders. He said, there ought to be one general inspecting and supervising officer, to see that the duty of all the Boards was done. He blamed also the niggardliness of standing haggling with ship-builders for a few shillings a ton in each ship, when the great and important interests of the nation were at stake. If it was for the interest of the builders to prefer the merchant's bargain, why not make up to them the difference. It was natural for men to prefer the employer that paid them best.

Mr. Wilberforce lamented that he should have his feelings irritated by men in office endeavouring to impress despondency on that House. He declared all that the Noble Lord had said on the subject of the Marine of Great Britain's being in former reigns inferior to that of the House of Bourbon, went to harrow and tear up by the roots all those ideas of the glory of this country, which he had been taught to adopt in his infancy, and which made every Englishman's breast glow with the noblest ardour, whenever he heard of Great Britain's being involved in a contest with France and Spain. He said, in addition to what had fallen from Mr. Webb,

Webb, that a ship of the line, called the Temple, had been built some years since at the town he had the honour to represent, the town of Kingston upon Hull; and ships might be procured from the same yard regularly, if encouragement was given; for there was no want of shipwrights, and there was no charge of extravagance.

Lord *Mulgrave* said, that there were two ships built at Hull, the Temple and the Ardent. The Temple, after having been at sea only three years, on a fine summer's day, in weather perfectly calm, went down and was lost. The Ardent, soon after she was fitted out, was obliged to be sent into dock, and cost nearly as much repairing, as she would have done to be re-built: an expence arising from the extreme rottenness of her timbers. These were reasons to induce the Admiralty to be cautious how they ventured to contract again with the same yard.

Admiral *Keppel* begged leave to inform the Committee, that the Temple was sent to the West-Indies, and had her bottom almost entirely eaten out by the worms; after which, she went down in the open sea, exactly as the noble Lord had represented.

Mr. *Cox* said, that, to his knowledge, Mr. Randall was now building either two or three ships for Government.

Mr. *Fox* said, he could not suffer the amendment on this important question to go to a vote and a division without marking the extraordinary sort of defence of the Admiralty-Board, which had been set up and persisted in by the Noble Lord who had stood forward in its defence. The Noble Lord had told the Committee, in the language of exultation and of triumph, that the Navy of England now was greater and more numerous than the Navy of England last war. Good God! was the Navy of England of this day to fight the Navy of England of that day; if it were, the argument would be a good one! The fact was, the Navy of the House of Bourbon was greater than ever it had been known; the Navy of England was to fight that Navy, and the sole question was, was it greater and stronger than the Navy of the House of Bourbon? That was the only comparative point of view in which the matter could be regarded, and from that sort of comparison only would the merit, or the criminality, of the present Board of Admiralty, result! He complimented Lord *Mulgrave* on his personal honour and his personal feelings, declaring he believed him to be a man who loved his profession and loved his country. He asked, to what a pitiful defence was the Admiralty that day reduced?

reduced?—Merely to the simple complaint, that Mr. Wells asked an inordinate price;—that a single ship-builder's refusing to work upon such terms as the Admiralty wished to tie him down to, had stopped the exertions of Great Britain, as a naval power, and rendered her incapable of resisting the efforts of her great and her powerful enemies! He laughed at Lord Mulgrave, for saying, as an unanswerable reply to Mr. Wilberforce, that the Temple went down on a summer's day, and bid him remember, that the Marlborough, a man of war built in one of the King's yards, went down at the same time. Before he concluded, he said, he had long determined to take such measures as should bring the present First Lord of the Admiralty to his merited punishment; that he was convinced of his guilt, and waited only for a fit opportunity of bringing it forward; and most assuredly, when that opportunity offered, he would not fail to seize it.

Mr. Potter. Mr. Potter defended the Admiralty, and said, from his own connexions in business with it, he was convinced the Admiralty-Board was zealously inclined to promote the true interests of their country; that they did all in their power to put that intention in practice, and that no criminality was imputable to them.

At half after nine the House divided on the amendment; Ayes 73, Noes 143.

The main question was then put and agreed to; as was also the consequent motion for granting a sum not exceeding 4l. per man, per month, for their maintenance.—The House was resumed and adjourned.

December 6.

On bringing up the report from the Committee, of the vote of 100,000 seamen, Mr. Hussy rose, as he said, to make his amendment again; but the Speaker informed him, that it was not possible for the House to amend the vote of the Committee by an addition. All grants must originate in the Committee of Supply. The Honourable Gentleman, therefore, if he wished to renew his Amendment, must move for the recommitment of the report. On this Mr. Hussy acquiesced, and the report was brought up and confirmed.

December 7.

No Debate.

December 10.

No Debate.

December 11.

No Debate.

Decem-

December 12.

When the order of the day was called for and the House were going into a committee of supply to vote the army, Sir James Lowther rose to make a previous motion; before the House went into a committee to vote the army supplies, it became them to inquire, whether they were to persevere in this war, and feed it with more British treasure, and feed it with more British blood? It had been obstinately, fatally pursued. The country was drained, exhausted, dejected. Their hearts were against it. — They considered it as a struggle against nature, in which every thing was to be hazarded, and nothing to be got. The speech from the throne had given them a most serious alarm; it shewed them that ministers were determined to persevere in spite of calamity; that they were bigotted to the prosecution of the contest, and that more blood and more money was to be lavished. They saw them going on in opposition to all the experience that they had had; that the surrender of an army only gave them spirit to risk and to lose a second; and the surrender of a second instigated them but to venture a third. There was no end of loss, nor of madness. Our fleets were every where inferior; two of our armies had been captured, and a stain had been fixed upon our arms, and upon the honour and faith of the nation, by a most cruel article in the capitulation of Lord Cornwallis. They went on from year to year against the voice of the people of England, because they were fatally supported by a set of men whom they paid for the purpose in that House. The general voice of the people of England was against them, and still they persevered. In such a moment, therefore, to remain longer submissive, would be disgraceful in that House, as well as criminal; they would cease to be the representatives of the people, and become the representatives of the minister. They must, if they designed to do their duty, and to discharge their trust to their constituents, come to a specific declaration on the point, and put an end to the war by a peremptory resolution. It was for this reason that he recommended to the House, to declare, “that it is the opinion of this House, that the war carried on in the colonies and plantations of North America, has proved ineffectual either to the protection of his Majesty’s loyal subjects in the said colonies, or for defeating the dangerous designs of our enemies.” And this declaration the honourable Baronet said, would lead to a second

Sir James
Lowther.

cond proposition, which he also purposed to make, and which was, "that it is the opinion of this House, that under the present circumstances of the country, all further attempts to reduce the revolted colonies to obedience are contrary to the true interests of this kingdom, as tending to weaken its efforts against its ancient and powerful enemies." He concluded with moving the first proposition.

Mr. Powys. Mr. *Powys* rose to second the motion, and he declared that he did it with the most heartfelt satisfaction, for so convinced had he been of the propriety and even necessity of such a resolution, that as his honourable friend, from whom on account of his great weight and interest in the country it came with so much more grace, he had determined, unconnected as he was, to have made it himself, for he most sincerely believed, that it was the only means left to us, in our present situation, by which we could extricate ourselves from our difficulties, and retrieve our rank in Europe. We had persevered in this war against the voice of reason and wisdom, against experience that ought to teach, against calamity that ought to make us feel. It was the idol of his Majesty's Ministers, to which they had sacrificed the interests of the empire, and almost half the territories: They bowed before it, they made the nation bow; they said that the resources of the empire were not exhausted; they said so, because they themselves found no diminution of income. Their annual incomes arose out of the public purse, and instead of diminishing, they increased with the misfortunes and the impoverishment of the country. The illusion which had filled the minds of some gentlemen with the hope of seeing America reduced to her former obedience to this country was now no more; and though at first it might have betrayed honest men into a determination to support the measures of ministers, which had that reduction in view, he could not conceive how it came to pass, that now, when the illusion was at an end, when repeated disasters and calamities had proved that the reduction of America, by force, was impracticable, there could be found a set of honest, independent gentlemen, who could persevere in supporting those measures, by which the empire had been dismembered and destroyed. That ministers should persevere in the mad plan of pursuing the phantom of conquest in America was not at all surprising to him; on the contrary, it was extremely natural; because to the war they owed their situations and their emoluments, and by a peace they must lose them: but
this

this was not the case of independent gentlemen who supported them; and he was ready to confess, that among the friends of administration in that House, he could reckon some gentlemen of independent fortunes; from what motives, or on what principles, such men continued to support the present administration, he was really at a loss to point out; nay, he could not so much as guess.

Could it be from experience of their abilities? alas! the whole history of the American war was, from one end to the other, one continued proof that system and abilities were not to be found in the management of our force in the Colonies: an army was marched from Canada, and captured at Saratoga; another from Charles-town, and surrendered at York-town.

Was it in the strength and number of our allies that they hoped for success from those measures to which they gave their support? Melancholy reflection! We were left to contend alone with our enemies; abandoned by all the world, we could not find a friend from pole to pole.

There were in this country, at this time, all the signs and tokens of a falling state. The descriptions given of the marks and signs of the decay and fall of a great empire, written by one of the ablest historians of the present age, was so applicable to those times, and to this country, that, if the House would give him leave, he would quote the passage. It described the signs to be, that the government of Rome at this period, the period of its decay, under Valentinian III. "ceased to be formidable abroad, and became odious and
"oppressive at home: that taxes encreased with the poverty
"of the state; and that the emperors wasted the resources
"of the empire, in carrying on wars against rebels that
"they themselves had made: that the distant parts of the
"empire were either oppressed by their governors into insur-
"rection and revolt, or left defenceless, a prey to invading
"enemies: that the senators were corrupted to abuse their
"trust: that discipline was relaxed, measures were weak,
"changeable, and inconsistent; that ministers were suffered
"to act without having the confidence of the empire, and
"that economy was neglected in proportion as it became
"necessary." These, he said, were the signs given by that historian of the declension and the fall of the empire of Rome. That historian (Mr. Gibbon), whose enrollment in the administration was the only accession of which his Majesty's ministers had to boast, had given this description: and, in another

ther place, speaking of the emperor Honorius, he says, that "it was the fashion of the court, at that time, to resist the voice and the intreaties of the people; and Honorius himself was deluded by his officers of state into an impolitic declaration, that he was for implacable, eternal war." The historian says, that there no misfortunes nor calamities could warn them to desist, but that they persevered; and were ruined. This description was so strong, so expressive, so applicable, that though it was said to belong to Rome, he could not help thinking that it alluded to a nearer country, and a nearer period. He called upon gentlemen to recollect that the war in which we were engaged in America, was not like a war between two rival, or two neighbouring states, about a barrier or a boundary; a contest which, however it ended, could not detract much from the importance or weight of either. It was a war in which every conclusion was against us; in which we had suffered every thing, without gaining any thing. We weakened no enemy by our efforts. We exhausted no rival by distressing ourselves; every point of the war was against us. He made some very ingenious remarks on the conduct of ministers, with respect to the American war. "It was not," said they, "a war of ambition, of avarice, of rancour. We never designed nor wished to reduce America by force." This was their language; and to maintain this they must say, that the various expeditions which have been undertaken were only expeditions of friendship. The attacks of our arms were only a sort of conciliatory propositions. General Burgoyne was only a commissioner of peace. They had no hostile intentions, or at least his Majesty's ministers furnished them with no hostile powers against our fellow-subjects in America. He took notice of this, and he took notice of it in this way, because really the whole of the American war had been a war of delusion, from the beginning to the end. Every promise had been broken, every assertion had been falsified, every object had been completely given up. Ministers had said one thing one day, they had come down, and with grave faces said the direct contrary the next. It was now a war of this sort, then a war of that sort; now a war of revenue, then a war of supremacy; now a war of coercion, then a war of friendship; that the people of this country, that House, and particularly the country gentlemen, had been deluded, confounded, abused and cheated. They had found at last that evasion but led to evasion, and trick to trick.

His

His Majesty's ministers had called it principle to persevere. Firmness our repeated losses have now more properly converted into obstinacy ; and the attachment to what are called the ancient principles of a party, would, continued any longer, be an evidence of phrenzy. Men, worthy men, doubtless there were, who on principle had been induced to vote with administration ; but could their eyes, in this alarming moment, be shut to the fallacy of their opinions. This was not a time for men to group together, or indulge in the narrow-minded distinction of party, when every honest heart and hand in the kingdom should level the pitiful boundaries of separation, and unite in one powerful body, to avert the wreck with which this unhappy country was so imminently threatened. His Majesty's ministers had said to the Americans, we will restore your old governments, if you will return to your allegiance. How had they shewn their disposition to do this, when a temporary prospect of opportunity occurred ? This fine tempting promise turned out to be no more than this,—that they were willing to restore their ancient governors. They embarked Lord Dunmore, and dispatched him to his ancient government of Virginia, as a likely ministerial means of conciliating the affections of the people of that province. He, whose former mild conduct, and easy, amicable ministry, had made them so contented and so happy ; but the termination put to our proceedings in Virginia had disappointed this well-laid scheme, and a certain clerk, secretary, and colonel Thompson was now sent to reconcile his countrymen to Great-Britain. He called upon gentlemen to say, if there was still any hopes, after the disaster in Virginia ; if there was still any disposition in their minds to go on ; what ray of hope was not blasted ! what prospect had not failed ! what object, as he had said, was not abandoned ! The country gentlemen, who had been deceived in the beginning, could be deluded no more. There was no idea of drawing a revenue from that country ; there was no idea of alleviating the burthens of Britain, by carrying it on ; there was no other idea, and there could be no other reason, than to preserve the power, the consequence, and the emoluments, which flowed from it.

It was time therefore for Parliament to interfere, and to prevent that total ruin, which the measures of administration could not fail to bring on, if they should remain unchecked : the motion that had been just made might prevent that ruin ; it did not refuse a supply ; it did not clog the wheels of go-

vernment, nor did it criminate any man, or set of men; it had no retrospective tendency; it only asserted a fact, which nobody could dispute; of the truth of which the whole world was perfectly well acquainted: it did not encroach upon the prerogatives of the executive power; it did not take away from the Crown the right to distribute the forces of the state in whatever manner it should think for the benefit of the people; it went no farther than to say, that among the operations of the war, America should not be the theatre. Surely ministers would not be so weak and ridiculous to set up that old, stale objection, which was used on all occasions, when attempts were made for the good of the public; and that was, that the enemy would, if the motion should be carried, be let into the secrets of the cabinet, and be made acquainted with the future plans of our operations. But this was an idle objection; it could be meant only to deceive that House, or surely no man in his senses could suppose, that telling the enemy that America shall be no longer the theatre of war, can possibly discover to them where we mean to act with vigour and effect: on the contrary, it would produce this effect, that the enemy, not knowing against what part of their dominions we should direct our attacks, would be alarmed for their safety, and held in a dreadful suspense; but it was farcical to say, that because the war in America should cease, the enemy must necessarily know what would be the particular object of attack. Would gentlemen say that the dominions of both branches of the House of Bourbon were such a speck upon the globe, that the moment we sheathed the sword in America, the French and Spaniards must necessarily know against what spot of their territories we might afterwards mean to draw it? Surely not; for they were vulnerable in a thousand places; and therefore the probable consequence of a cessation of hostilities in America, would be a general consternation and alarm amongst our European enemies, accompanied with continual apprehensions for the safety of their wide-extended dominions. Seeing therefore that there were many powerful reasons for the House to adopt the present resolution; and not being able to foresee one forcible objection to it, he thought he could not better discharge his duty to his country than by giving it his most hearty support. He liked the wording of it, upon account of its being at once explicit and concise; neither giving any handle to misconception, nor leaving any thing unsaid which it was necessary to say in the present awful and

critical

critical moment: for this reason he highly approved of it; for this reason he warmly recommended it to the House, and he trusted it would be accepted.

Lord North rose, he said, at so early a period, because on so important a question, and on so important a day, it would naturally be expected that some person in office should give his opinion. He would do it very shortly. The motions of the honourable Baronet, for he would speak to them both; though it was not strictly in order, it was yet agreeable to use, as they were both connected, and were to follow one another. With regard to the motions themselves, he could not but acknowledge they were fair, moderate, free from passion, not founded on personal resentment, and therefore, as far as the style of them was in question, perfectly unexceptionable. How far they were just, how far they were necessary, and how far it was either prudent or politic for the House to accede to them at that moment, were very different considerations.

His Lordship then proceeded. He said, he had no objection to speak out, and give as much satisfaction to the House as it would be prudent for them to expect, or for him to give. The motions, he said, concluded the American war in every shape and form; they prescribed to the executive branch of the legislature the manner of continuing the war; and consequently pointed out to the enemies of this country what were to be the measures, what the system, and what the mode and operations of the war. To so much, he averred, did the second motion extend; for it declared, that all attempts to reduce America to obedience by force, would be destructive, &c. Why then, notwithstanding what the honourable gentlemen has said of its being ridiculous and contemptible to set up such an excuse, I must, says the noble Lord, insist and contend, that the enemy is informed by this means of our future plan, for all our operations are declared to be directed against them solely. They are prepared by our own declaration. Our government, says he, is more favourable to our enemy in point of affording them information, than if it were more arbitrary; but we enlarge the opportunities, we give them additional advantages, when we proclaim in Parliament how we mean to conduct ourselves in our ensuing campaign. He next said, that he should object undoubtedly to the motions, but in giving a negative to them, he felt himself bound in some degree, and especially, after what passed lately on another occasion, to

speak more out upon the design of the future mode of the prosecution of the war than he was generally accustomed to do, or indeed than it was either wise or politic for a man in a high and responsible office to do, at any time, unless the urgent necessity of the case rendered it impossible for him to make any other election of conduct. He was willing to declare his sincere and honest opinion, "that it would not be wise nor right to go on with the American war as we had done, that was to say, to send armies to traverse from the south to the north of the provinces in their interior parts, as had been done in a late case, and which had failed of producing the intended and the desired effect." He was ready to say so much. It was a declaration attended with some inconvenience, nor would he have made it, even then, had not the estimates of the army, already upon the table, declared as much in the most clear and express manner, to every gentleman, who would have given himself the trouble to examine them with any degree of attentive perusal. By those estimates gentlemen would find, that the army which the Secretary at war meant to ask for, was the same as that asked for last year, with some little variation for the East-Indies; whereas had it been the intention of Government, or had his Majesty's ministers thought it adviseable, expedient, or wise, circumstanced as the country now was, to prosecute the war continentally, according to the mode of carrying it on hitherto, they must have applied for a much larger army, as without a very considerable increase of military force, such an idea would have been absurd in the highest extreme, and obviously impracticable. Having said this, he must add that he would not agree to the motions of the honourable Baronet, for they put an end to the American war in every shape, and crippled the hands of Government even in other respects; for, by the clear and expressive words of the motion, they could not carry on even a war with the other powers in that part. It would be difficult, and impossible to say, what would and what would not be called the American war; or rather, what would not be called a war, to reduce the Americans to obedience.

The honourable gentleman who seconded the motion had said, that he did not wish to take from the executive power its constitutional right to distribute the force of the empire; and he had said very properly; but was he clear, that the hands of the executive power would not be tied up by the second resolution, from availing itself of even the most favourable conjuncture, to strike a blow in America, if such a conjuncture

conjuncture should offer? for by this resolution the war was completely to die away in that country; and not to be revived again, in any shape, or on any pretence whatever. His Lordship went into an examination of the motion, were it carried, either with regard to peace or war. In the first place he observed, that the wording of it was so general and and loose, that he trusted the House would, on that account, never agree to it. The words of the second motion, were to resolve against "all further attempts to reduce the American provinces to obedience by force." All efforts! said his Lordship, is the government of the country then to have its hands tied up by sea and land! They must not retain any posts in the colonies certainly, for that would evidently be said to tend to reduce the Americans to obedience by force; and did not gentlemen perceive the necessity that there might be for retaining certain posts in America, for the convenience even of carrying on the war against France and Spain. Must you not have ports and harbours there, to give you an opportunity of acting on the seas? And would gentlemen tie up the hands of Government from occupying those posts in America? Surely not. Did gentlemen foresee the consequences? Were we to give up all our posts in America, and totally withdraw our troops? Or were we to preserve some posts? He knew that there were different opinions on that head; let gentlemen speak out: would they have all the troops withdrawn, and the posts given up? He was satisfied that few indeed would advise such a measure; then if posts were to be maintained, they must be defended if attacked, and this might surely be called war in America; was such a war to be renounced? Surely not, as long as we were determined to preserve our posts, and these posts ought to be preserved for several reasons, we had friends and subjects within our lines, who contributed to consume our manufactures, and we had trade which would be injured by the loss of our posts: might not Rhode Island be taken as a post in the ensuing summer, if found more convenient, more tenable, and more useful than New-York? Again, were gentlemen's minds made up as to Charles-town and Halifax? All these were in his opinion important considerations, and required very serious discussion, but which would be wholly shut out from future consideration if the present motion was agreed to: If we keep these posts, we must garrison them, and as long as they are garrisoned, we must be liable to attacks, and consequently be under a necessity

cessity of waging a defensive war, as often as we should be attacked, for it would be madness indeed to tie up the swords of our forces, and prevent them from acting even on the defensive; this would be an unpardonable piece of absurdity in us, but still it would be an absurdity that the resolution would warrant. But this was not all; it absolutely prohibited Government from acting even against the armed ships and the privateers of America; for to so much it went, if he must take the terms of the motion for his guide: "all attempts to reduce America to obedience by force," included every species of operation that could be contrived; were gentlemen prepared to go this length? were they ready to order the British ships to suffer themselves to be insulted, beaten, taken by the American cruisers without striking a blow? Was it thus that gentlemen wished to preserve the honour of the British flag? Would America consent to this new scheme? Would they remain inactive when we became so? — Without knowing what America would do, we must withdraw our armies, withdraw our ships, give up to them all their ports, open to them all the seas, suffer them to give what encouragement or what assistance they pleased to the enemies of this country, while we are tied up by a resolution of Parliament, from acting in opposition to them in any way. And what effect would the resolution produce with respect either to peace or our future operations? Would any gentleman take upon him to say, that the most effectual way to render an enemy tractable, and make him reasonable with respect to terms of peace, would be to declare, that we would not fight him any more? In his opinion, the arrogance and haughtiness of the Americans would rise in proportion as we should sink into despair; and that therefore it would be the worst measure in the world towards obtaining an honourable peace, to say that we will totally renounce the war.

The consequences of the resolution would not be less prejudicial to our interests, with respect to war; for to keep our troops in America, without suffering them to act, would be supporting them only for the purpose of parade, or swallowing up the treasure of the nation, while they could be of no one possible advantage to us, their swords being all tied up. And would not even the Americans be ready to meet us in the West-Indies, and to turn all their force to that quarter of the world? Did gentlemen wish to see the common enemy act in that manner? If they did not, they could not be
friends

friends to the second resolution. If they wished only for a promise, or information that no offensive war should be carried on in America, as it had in the last and former campaigns, he had already given all the satisfaction on that head, which it would be prudent either in them to ask, or in him to give: it certainly was not in the intention of ministers to pursue the war in future in America as it had been last campaign, by marching armies through the colonies; this he thought might satisfy gentlemen; but more he ought not to say, or the House to hear.

It was therefore his opinion, that to adopt the motions would be the height of impolicy and of absurdity. If it was not the meaning of the honourable Baronet, and of the gentlemen on the other side of the House, to put an end to the American war *in toto*, and by doing so to prevent us from keeping posts, from fighting American privateers, and even from acting on the defensive: if they did not mean all that he had said, he could only observe that so much would their motion bear to be drawn from it; and he was sure that if he had brought in such a motion, and had given it a less extensive explanation, it would have been called shuffling, twisting, turning, and evading, in order to delude the House. The honourable gentleman had said that his Majesty's ministers were actuated by ambition, and by avarice; and while their incomes accrued from the public purse, they did not think that the resources of the country were exhausted. He did not wish to make people entertain a favourable opinion of him, in particular, and of his disinterestedness, and of his purity. He could only say, with respect to his income, that he would readily and freely give it all, both what came from the public purse, and what was his private purse, to see a speedy, honourable, and advantageous conclusion put to this war. It was said to be a war abhorred by the country, and disagreeable to all. He could assure the honourable gentleman, that there was no man lamented the war more than himself; for of all the persons in this country to whom the war was disagreeable and inconvenient, he was convinced that it was the most disagreeable and inconvenient to himself. The honourable gentleman had allowed, that there were some honourable and independent members, country gentlemen, who had supported his Majesty's ministers in this war; it was very true, they had been supported by country gentlemen, independent in their fortunes, in their rank, in their character, who thought that his Majesty's ministers

ministers were actuated by a laudable, virtuous desire of preserving the just authority of Parliament, and who therefore gave them their support. They saw and believed that it was a truly British war, carried on on British principles, and for the true and ultimate interests of Britain. He assured the House, that without such support he would have never gone on with the war. He thought it all along a grievous necessity to which they were impelled, and far from being, as was suggested, a war of ambition, or of avarice, or of pride, or of rancour. In regard to the motions, as he had said, they were improper, unfit to be complied with; the estimates for the army were on the table; the order of the day was for going into a committee upon them, and then gentlemen would have an opportunity of seeing that no substitution was demanded to replace the army lost in Virginia, and that as no farther supply of men was asked for the service of the current year, it could not possibly be the intention of Government to proceed in the war with America on the same scale, and with the same plan, as they had done hitherto. This he thought should suffice gentlemen who were dissatisfied with that method, since it shewed them to a certainty, or next to a certainty, that it was to be conducted on a less extensive scale. If they had meant to continue the plan of last year, they would certainly have asked for more troops; as it was, they asked for fewer, in fact for that service; and if gentlemen would look at the arrangements on the estimates, they would see this fact. For these reasons, therefore, he must move "That the order of the day be now read."

Sir Fletcher
Norton.

Sir *Fletcher Norton* spoke in answer to the noble Lord. He said the motions were made because they could not trust his Majesty's ministers. The noble Lord said they were not to traverse, as they had done, from the South to the North; and that they had not asked for a force to carry on such a war: but what security had the Parliament or the nation for any assertion of this sort? Had not these ministers, these very identical ministers, pursued this traversing scheme from year to year, against the voice and against the wish of the people? Had not the scheme of 1781 been the scheme of 1780? Had not the scheme of 1780 been the scheme of 1779? Had not the surrender of the army at Saratoga only led to the surrender of the army at York-town? Had they not persevered, in spite of experience, in opposition to all that wisdom could teach? Had they not gone against hope,
against

against reason, against probability? and they now asked the representatives of the people to trust them further. The noble Lord had declared, that he did not mean to carry on the war in future, by marching armies through the colonies of America, as had been unfortunately the system for some time past. But what security had they for the declarations being made good? One of the King's servants had thrown out such an idea in the course of his speech; but who knew what opinion was entertained by the rest of the cabinet? Was want of unanimity among the ministers, among the King's servants, so uncommon a circumstance? Besides, what sort of language was held in the speech of the minister at the opening of the session? A language diametrically opposite. The Speech called upon the House to pursue the American war, and the Address pledged the House to comply with the desire of the Speech. How then were they to reconcile so contrary a conduct? The noble Lord seemed to suppose the motions unnecessary after his declaration. The fact was as he had said, they would not trust ministers, and therefore the motion was brought forward that they might have a specific vote and declaration of the House, that this mad and impolitic war should be no longer proceeded in; and it was his firm sentiment, that until this was done not a single shilling of money should be voted as a supply to his Majesty. The noble Lord had argued that the second proposition was so extensive as to put an end, not only to all offensive operations against the Americans, but asked if it did not put an end to all defensive measures, and even tended to prevent our ships from fighting the American cruisers, should they even attack us. The noble Lord knew that his question was ridiculous; he knew that the motions had no reference whatever to any naval operations: all that the honourable gentleman wanted was for the House to declare, that they would no longer pursue the object of the war. They prescribed no particular mode; they went simply to this fact: involved as you are, in a war with France, Spain, and Holland, do not waste your strength and resources in a mad attempt upon America. Had the motions any such view as the noble Lord supposed, they would then indeed have an unconstitutional tendency, and would assume a direction of business which was the proper province of the executive branch of government. The mode of carrying on the war was a matter solely for the King's cabinet to determine. He and other gentlemen might possibly have their opinion on the subject, but certainly it

was not for them to suggest advice upon it to administration; the constitution had placed the responsibility for the measures of government on their shoulders, and there it ought to rest. The noble Lord had contended against the motions, that they would convey information to the enemy where we should aim the next blow at their possessions; so that the noble Lord had laboured to prove to the House, that a negative vote would have an affirmative effect: was this the noble Lord's logic? if it was, perhaps the noble Lord in the blue ribbon was the only man to be found who would support such an argument. Would any man say, that a resolution to abandon a war in one part of the globe, was a declaration in what other part of the world it was meant to be carried on? Certainly no man in his senses would maintain so absurd a position. If the enemies' possessions were circumscribed, if the scope of our operations was small, there would be some reason for saying, that a declaration of a purpose to go to war with the enemy, was to point out where the field of action was to be; but here, where we were engaged with so many enemies, to argue, that by declaring we should not fight with America was to give notice where we should attack France, and where Spain, and where Holland, was puerile to the last degree.

He said, that from the bad tendency of the American war, from the continual decrease of our trade and commerce, ever since it was commenced, from the fruitless expenditure of so many millions, from the loss of so much blood, from the diminished and degraded state of the empire, he had not a doubt left on his mind, and he was convinced every man, who would seriously lay his hand on his heart, and ask himself that question, would coincide with him in opinion, that the constitutional interference of that House was absolutely necessary.

Mr. W.
Ellis.

Mr. *Welbore Ellis* was of a very different opinion, and he thought that the House, in adopting the resolution, would be guilty of a political suicide. The right hon. member, who had gone before him, was not certainly grounded, in saying that coming to one negative did not develope all the affirmative parts of our plans: in his opinion, the right hon. gentleman was mistaken; for if we should say, in the face of the world, we will no longer continue the war in America, this negative would be tantamount to this affirmation—we will turn all our force against the islands of our enemies in the West-Indies, and then let our enemies in France

and Spain take notice that we intend to meet them there, where, from this timely notice, we hope they will be prepared to receive us. As to the withdrawing the troops totally from America, it was a measure to which he could not, for one, give consent. It had always been a favourite maxim of policy with this country, to keep the war at a distance from home: this maxim could be pursued in the present war, but by keeping the troops in America; whereby the Americans would be kept at bay, and prevented from enlarging their views.

If the troops should be kept in America, it would be folly in the extreme to tie up their hands by such a resolution as the present; for circumstances might occur in which we ought to make flying expeditions, and have a fleet arriving upon that coast: the resolution, therefore, could answer no other purpose than that of preventing us from availing ourselves of circumstances to annoy the enemy, when we could do it with most advantage to ourselves. It was absolutely necessary that we should have posts in America, and harbours, even for the prosecution of the French and Spanish war: squadrons and ships could not occupy the seas without having ports to repair in. Were gentlemen inclined to deprive us of that advantage? He could not persuade himself that the gentlemen who supported the motions had maturely considered the consequences that would attend the carriage of them into a resolution of the House. The first evil that struck him as the result of such an event, would be the fall of our West-India islands into the hands of the enemy; for if the hands of the executive power were in a manner bound up by a resolution of that House from acts of hostility against America, without any condition or previous negotiation with them for a certain pacification, what could possibly prevent them from seizing on our possessions in the neighbourhood of the continent? Nothing. On the contrary, mistaken gratitude to their good allies (as they are fond of styling them) and a confidence in their delusions, from so weak a step as this now recommended; would doubtless urge them to direct their utmost force, when left unrestrained, to do us all the mischief they could in every part of our dependencies; and we should have the mortification to see the French and Americans joined in the West-Indies, or perhaps joined in the Channel.

The honourable *John Townshend* reprobated, in most severe terms, the total misconduct, ignorance, and mad obstinacy

Hon. John
Townshend

of his Majesty's ministers; and exhorted the House, by every consideration of duty and attachment to this country, to agree to the motions before the House, as the only practicable means of putting an end to the accursed and ruinous war with our Colonies. He said, that, notwithstanding the utter impracticability of the accursed and ruinous war with the Colonies, yet

The Douglas and the Hotspur, both together,
Were confident against the world in arms.

The noble Lord in the blue ribbon, and the noble Lord, the secretary for the American department, were determined to persevere, in spite of opposition. They were obstinately leagued together, bent on the pursuit of this mad war against their country, and against every thing that ought to be dear to men.

The noble Lords in administration had the presumption to ask further confidence and further supplies from that House, and to expect that a justly exasperated nation would still remain patient under their misfortunes, and submit to further insults and injuries. He ascribed the disgraces that had attended his Majesty's arms to the weakness and wickedness of administration, who had plunged this nation into an unnecessary war, which they had conducted in so wretched a manner, that it proved, beyond all argument, their utter incapacity to govern this or any other country, under any circumstances, much less to be entrusted in a moment of so much critical hazard as the present; and he was ready to declare it as his firm and honest opinion, that they had begun this war and persevered in it from base and unwarrantable motives; from the lust of wealth and power, to which they sacrificed the interests of their country. This was his true opinion, and had been so for a long time. He mentioned the petitions and remonstrances of the people, and asked if it was consistent with the duty of that House to act in direct contradiction to the known wishes of their constituents? He returned his thanks to the hon. baronet who had made the present motion, and to the honourable gentleman who had so ably seconded it; and as it appeared to him likely to meet the desires of the people, and answer a good purpose, by giving our natural enemies to know, that the British House of Commons had expressly abandoned the mad and Quixote idea of subduing America to obedience by force, he would certainly give it his hearty support.

Mr.

Mr. *J. Granville* followed the last honourable speaker nearly on the same grounds; and in the course of his speech, quoted some words which the late Lord Chatham had let fall in the House of Lords upon the unfortunate affair at Saratoga, when he called upon Parliament to relinquish this mad war: "What!" said that great man, "has some dreadful inundation, has some tremendous earthquake swallowed half the empire, that the nation should stand thus deprived of sense and motion!"—But what would have been the feelings, what would have been the expressions of that eloquent patriot, had he lived to see a second Saratoga business, still more destructive and terrible in its consequences than that which was then before his eyes! His sympathetic bosom, which beat ever in unison with the pulse of the commonwealth, would have been too full for utterance on so calamitous an occasion. It would have, by its smothered griefs, bade you pursue the measure, which is now so wisely, and after so much melancholy experience, offered to the consideration of the House. In this persuasion, said he, I offer my slender support to these motions, by the success of which, at this crisis, we can alone hope for safety.

Mr. J.
Granville.

Sir *Edward Deering* spoke on the other side, and expressed his confidence in the present ministers. He declared, when he came down to the House, he was entirely undetermined which way he should vote. The House, and the noble Lord in the blue ribbon, know that he had both spoken and voted against him, when he thought him wrong in his measures; and he would have done so that day, had not the noble Lord made the declaration which the House had so lately heard. He considered himself to be an independent man. He was a country gentleman; and he believed that he was as incapable as any man in that House of giving support to measures of which he disapproved. He thought what the noble Lord had said was perfectly satisfactory. He had all along supported the noble Lord in the blue ribbon in the prosecution of the American war, because he considered the commencement of the war to have been just and necessary; and because he had hoped that it was possible to have brought it to a happy conclusion. But as people in general were tired of the expence, and the burthens that expence occasioned, he thought the noble Lord in the blue ribbon had acted wisely in declaring that he meant to change the mode of carrying it on. That the noble Lord had spoken out, and had no reserve, was evident from the army estimates; for

Sir Edward
Deering.

change. The ministers, he said, falsely and wickedly declared the American war to have been popular in its origin. Was it popular? Did the great body of the people approve of the unconstitutional principle leading to a destructive end? He believed not. But if it were so, which he could by no means allow, it was rendered popular by delusion. They cheated the nation by a thousand misrepresentations, by a thousand false stories and false promises; and a part of the people were deceived, and did acquiesce in the iniquitous system. But if they began it, because it was popular, they ought now to conclude it, because it had ceased to be so. Whatever doubt there might be of the original popularity, there could be none of the present abhorrence. Abandon the war then, ye ministers who make the assertion. It is now universally unpopular. From one end of the kingdom to the other people are impoverished and clamorous. To that war and to your measures they ascribe all their calamities! The noble Lord said there was a maxim in the British constitution, contrived for the wisest purpose, "That the king could do no wrong." This made the ministers responsible for every measure of government, as they in fact and in justice ought to be; but the present administration had reversed this wise maxim. They had endeavoured to change responsibility from where it should lie to where it should not. They had converted acquiescence into counsel, and said the people are responsible for all the consequences of the American war, because they approved of it in its origin. Hear this, ye deluded people of Great Britain! Because you did not rise in the outset of this mad career, and pull those men from the seats which they have filled to your misfortune, they ascribe to you the calamities that they have brought upon the country! The noble Lord treated this idea with great energy, and concluded with a warm appeal to the House, to do that at last which they ought to have done at first, to hold a bold, constitutional language to those ministers, and tell them, Thus far you have gone with our tame acquiescence, but do not dare to provoke us farther. If you reject our advice, you may feel our vengeance.

Mr. Calvert said, that treaties to be binding, ought to be mutual: in all treaties of peace, there were two or more contracting parties, and that if one party in the war was not as willing to make peace as the other, it was next to an impossibility for a safe peace to take place. The present motion struck him as a declaration,

on the part of Great-Britain, that she would lay down her arms against the Americans, which would at once not only prove her incapacity to reduce her rebellious colonists to obedience, but would be an act of political despair, that could not fail to increase the ardour of her natural foes, and lend a spirit to their hostile enterprizes against her, which must be extremely prejudicial to the interests of this country. If America had expressed a pacific disposition, the measure now proposed to the House, would be less unjustifiable; but, as that was not the case, he could not but conceive, that the House's agreeing to the resolution, would cement the union between France and America more strongly, and render a dissolution of that union a matter utterly impracticable.

General Burgoyne said, that he hoped he should not be accused of pedantry, if he should make use of an allusion to a practice very common in war, and compare it to the conduct and reasoning of the minister: the practice was to set fire to a great quantity of wet and damaged stores, in order to blind the enemy with the smoke, and make them think that some great works were carrying on behind the fire; but when the smoke was blown away, it often appeared that nothing of consequence had been done, and that it had been merely a manœuvre to cover a change of place or to gain time; so with ministers, they made a great smoke in argument, but it meant just nothing. As a soldier, he wished to consider the question before the House in a military point of view; and he would submit it to any soldier in the House, whether posts could be kept up in America without an offensive war? A place d'armes could be of use only to serve as an inlet into the country; was it in this point of view that New-York was to be seen? It was; then of course it must be pronounced a nursery for an offensive war. A place d'armes might also be established for the purpose of securing the navigation of some strait, such as Calais of old might have been, when in the same hands with Dover, to prevent the communication of other nations between the British Channel and the German ocean: but were we going to establish such a species of place d'armes at three thousand miles distance from England, while the most famous place of arms of the like nature was on the point of being wrested from us? perhaps when we should have established a place d'armes at New-York, we might have reason to say *fuit Illium!* Gibraltar is no more: that important fortress was left to the mercy of the enemy, while we were pursuing the wildest

schemes in America; and he verily believed that there had been a time when it would cost the whole cabinet their heads to have left Gibraltar exposed as much as this ministry had done.

He confessed that in the glorious administration of Lord Chatham, that great minister had formed a design of establishing a place d'armes at Belleisle; by which he intended to keep in constant alarm the whole coast of France from Bayonne to Bourdeaux, and with seventeen or twenty thousand men make a great diversion in favour of the forces in Germany, from which place he expected to be able to force the French to withdraw a greater part of their army; but it ought to be remembered that when the plan was formed, the British flag was triumphant in every quarter of the globe, and was seen flying even in the bays of France; and therefore, if it was only the dominion of the sea that made such a project practicable, the like ought not to be undertaken now, when it was confessed not only that our navy was inferior to that of the enemy, but also that it was not in the nature of things that it should be otherwise.

It might be said, these were military observations, but they were addressed to a military secretary of state; the country had not forgot that he had been a soldier; the country feels he is a counsellor.

He had not touched, in any thing he had said, upon the principle of the war. The impracticability of it was a sufficient justification for supporting the present motion. But he would not sit down without one word upon the part, which it might be remembered, he took upon the opening of the dispute. When he was called to the service in America, he went to it reluctantly; but he confessed not with a repugnance to the principle of the contest. He had then considered it only upon the ground of taxing the colonies by the King in Parliament, in opposition to the mode of taxation by requisition of the Crown, and he then thought it the Whig side of the question. Had he been convinced of his error, by reflection only, he should have thought it his duty in that House to make a public recantation; and should every man, under the same conviction of error, follow that principle, he should have no doubt of the success of the ensuing division. But, Sir, says he, I am a convert on broader ground; I am convinced, upon comparing the conduct of ministers, as time has developed their system, that the American war was but part of a general design levelled against the constitution

constitution of this country, and the general rights of mankind. I have further demonstration, the conviction of a whole people. Passion and prejudice, and interest, may operate suddenly and partially; but when we see one principle pervading the whole continent, and daring, through difficulty and death, for a course of years, it must be a strong vanity and presumption in our own minds to suppose they are not right. It is reason, and the finger of God alone, that implants the same sentiment in three millions of people. I assert the truth of that fact, against all that art or contrivance can produce to the contrary.

It would be impertinent in him, he said, to enter into the refutation of the other arguments which had been so ably refuted by others; he adhered to the principle upon which he set out, that, declaring a design of maintaining posts of the nature of New-York, was declaring a design of offensive war; or, were he to be combated upon that principle, it must still be admitted, that such a maintenance of posts would be an improvident and a preposterous war, and thus convinced, he gave his hearty concurrence to the motion.

Sir *W. Dolben* said, that the resolutions were moderate, Sir W. Dolben. temperate, and senatorial; they criminated no person; they had no retrospect; but, as they ought to do, looked forward; however he was of opinion that the first contained too melancholy a truth, to go out to the world under the sanction and authority of the House; and the second he thought was premature, as an army was at all events necessary; and the army ought to be voted before the executive power should be directed not to employ any part of it in America. Gentlemen seemed to differ on the meaning of some particular words in the resolutions: he wished that both sides of the House could come to proper understanding on the subject. Let gentlemen explain themselves. Did they mean by the second resolution to preclude all naval operations against America? If they did not let them say so. If they wished to have the posts all given up, and the forces all withdrawn from America, let them declare themselves openly, and not bring a resolution which would admit of a different interpretation. If he understood the honourable gentleman rightly, who had so ably seconded the honourable Baronet's motion, his wish was to have the Minister give that House a satisfactory assurance that government would not persist in prosecuting that mad and frantic war, the war with America, in an offensive manner, by marching armies against the colo-

so still. If it must not be our empire, it ought be our grave. Nothing but union could save us. His Majesty's ministers, instead of striving to frame a government of unanimity and consent, had begun with dividing us at home before they embroiled us abroad. Unlike the great and glorious minister of the last war; he began with reconciling our own disagreements, quieting faction, conciliating the minds of all. In framing his administration he looked to every corner of the kingdom for talents; he selected from all sides men of the most powerful minds. He formed a phalanx out of divided factions; drew into one huge mass the ability of all parties; there he set his foot, and from that basis he shook the world around him.

Mr. Secretary at War.

Mr. *Secretary at War* blamed Colonel Barre for not specifying the articles which made the estimates scandalous. Some of the regiments were certainly low; they must be so, but they were not therefore to be left out. He objected to the motions for giving up the American war. Gentlemen might easily perceive from the estimates, that it was not the intention of his Majesty's ministers to carry on the American war as it had been. It was true, as had been observed by the right honourable gentleman, that the distribution of the army might be changed by the executive government, but undoubtedly the numbers asked for the several departments were not more than they required.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. *Fox* could not agree with gentlemen who would confine the eyes of Parliament to a forward view of matters, neglecting a retrospect. He said he could only judge of the future by a consideration of the past. To those who asserted the impolicy of the motion, on the score of its intention of unconditionally withdrawing our forces from attacking the Americans; he answered, that no other prudent measure could, in the nature of things, be adopted; since the Americans could not make the first overtures to us, without madly rendering themselves suspected by their new allies; whereas if we began the pacification first, it would tend not only to give them a confidence in us, but also to sow doubt and jealousies in the breasts of the French and Spaniards, with regard to the strength of a connection that they must be certain would never have existed, were it not for dire necessity. He described, in very strong colours, the misfortunes that must accrue from a war of posts. He said, that if New-York, for instance, was made a post, it would require fifteen thousand men to garrison it, besides a number

of ships, for without ships he understood it would not be safe. So much force then would be detached from the active business and the theatre of the war, and we should be rendered so much weaker in all expeditions that could be valuable. But this was not all, experience had told us that the garrison could not be supplied with provisions, even much less with stores and ammunition in America. They must be regularly supplied from Europe, and not having the superiority at sea, the whole fleet of Britain must be employed in conveying the transports to and from New-York. To do this, and to relieve Gibraltar, would be the great operations of every campaign, and we should have Gazettes extraordinary publishing the triumph of our escapes, and of our wonderful success in avoiding, or in brushing past the enemy. Such, alas! were the triumphs of the present ministry. It was not their boast that they had brought home conquests to their own country; that they had taken the islands of our enemies; that they had crippled their fleets, or destroyed their operations. No; all their pride and their loud triumph was: "we have relieved Gibraltar," and when this war of posts was instituted, it would be: "we have relieved New-York." The honourable general had well described the nature and the benefit of a post. It was only valuable when it was the inlet to a circumscribed sea; when it commanded the place and was the key, without which it was impossible to enter. Such was Gibraltar. Its situation made it the most valuable post, since by that we had it in our power to keep divided the forces of our enemies, and this advantage made it an object of great value; but under the present ministry had we received the benefit of this post? No: we had incurred the expence of its maintenance, but we had received no advantage whatever from the possession. Our fleet had been annually employed, hazarded, and crippled in relieving it, but not one advantage to us, or detriment to our enemies had arisen from it. We were then to have new posts with the same system. The honourable gentleman spoke against the absurdity of this measure, and against the weakness and impolicy of carrying on the war, or of pursuing the object of American dependency under the present circumstances.

The *Lord Advocate* said, that when the noble Lord declared that his Majesty's ministers would not any longer pursue the phantom of an internal, offensive war in America, they fully and effectually satisfied his mind. He professed that he would have voted against the noble Lord if he had not been

Lord Advocate.

so explicit, and if he had seemed to have inclined to prosecute the old system. But having said this, he was satisfied. He relied in the noble Lord's declaration; both from the high opinion which he had of his veracity, as well as from seeing that the declaration was confirmed by the estimates on the table. The mode of the war therefore was to be totally changed; but were the House ready to do what the last honourable gentleman advised, to abandon America totally, to give up all our posts, to withdraw all our troops, to deprive ourselves even of the advantages of chance, and in short to suffer America calmly and composedly to rivet her connection with France. He believed the House was not yet ready to go this length. He was willing openly to avow that in the former periods of this contest he entertained different sentiments of the event; but fatal experience had convinced him of the impracticability of reducing America to obedience by these means which we had pursued. He was for changing the mode but not for relinquishing the object.—The learned Lord concluded his speech with saying, that he had a very sincere friendship and regard for the noble Lord in the blue ribband. He believed him to be actuated in all his measures by the purest zeal for the service of his country. His opinion was of him, that he only wanted one quality to make him a most distinguished and commanding minister; he meant despotism and violence of temper; as to his private virtues, they were the subject of general admiration. The learned Lord was stopped in his panegyric by the noise of the hear hims, and of the laughs to which these expressions gave rise.

Mr. Burke. Mr. *Burke* made some facetious observations on the elegance of the learned Lord's panegyric, and on the unfortunate reception with which it had met. He was sorry, that after having suffered so much under the noble Lord's administration, the House was not in the humour to hear his panegyric. It would no doubt, have been honourable to both parties; for the brilliancy of the noble Lord's character could only have been equalled by the sincerity of the learned Lord's praise. He said, that the only alteration which was promised to Parliament that day, and to the nation was, that the mode of the war should be changed. An American war you must have; but because you have grown dissatisfied with the manner in which it has hitherto been carried on, we will change the plan, we will give you another plan, but it shall be the same war; we have squandered seventy millions in one way, we shall now squander

of ships, for without ships he understood it would not be safe. So much force then would be detached from the active business and the theatre of the war, and we should be rendered so much weaker in all expeditions that could be valuable. But this was not all, experience had told us that the garrison could not be supplied with provisions, even much less with stores and ammunition in America. They must be regularly supplied from Europe, and not having the superiority at sea, the whole fleet of Britain must be employed in conveying the transports to and from New-York. To do this, and to relieve Gibraltar, would be the great operations of every campaign, and we should have Gazettes extraordinary publishing the triumph of our escapes, and of our wonderful success in avoiding, or in brushing past the enemy. Such, alas! were the triumphs of the present ministry. It was not their boast that they had brought home conquests to their own country; that they had taken the islands of our enemies; that they had crippled their fleets, or destroyed their operations. No; all their pride and their loud triumph was: "we have relieved Gibraltar," and when this war of posts was instituted, it would be: "we have relieved New-York." The honourable general had well described the nature and the benefit of a post. It was only valuable when it was the inlet to a circumscribed sea; when it commanded the place and was the key, without which it was impossible to enter. Such was Gibraltar. Its situation made it the most valuable post, since by that we had it in our power to keep divided the forces of our enemies, and this advantage made it an object of great value; but under the present ministry had we received the benefit of this post? No: we had incurred the expence of its maintenance, but we had received no advantage whatever from the possession. Our fleet had been annually employed, hazarded, and crippled in relieving it, but not one advantage to us, or detriment to our enemies had arisen from it. We were then to have new posts with the same system. The honourable gentleman spoke against the absurdity of this measure, and against the weakness and impolicy of carrying on the war, or of pursuing the object of American dependency under the present circumstances.

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considered it highly necessary, as well for the assistance of the mode of prosecuting the war against the common enemy in future, as for the purpose of having a place of rendezvous and station for a fleet nearer the West-Indies than Great-Britain. New-York, with its dependencies; were, in his mind, by no means invaluable possessions. Gentlemen had compared New-York to Gibraltar, and said, that the garrison of New-York, like the garrison of Gibraltar, must be wholly furnished with provisions from Great-Britain. Gentlemen forgot, that the comparison was destitute of similarity, they forgot that Long-Island and Staten-Island were among the dependencies of New-York; that the former was uncommonly fertile, and productive of a variety of different articles of provision. This therefore shewed, that the argument, that all our army in garrison at New-York must be fed intirely from home, was ill-founded. There were likewise in New-York stores, &c. in great quantities, which it would be difficult to remove, and works which had cost this country immense sums of money. With regard to Charles-town and other posts, now possessed by us on the American continent, this was not the time that matter was to be decided upon. It was still his opinion that a mode of war might be adopted which was likely to terminate in the most advantageous manner; what that mode was, it was neither the business of the day, nor would it be proper to declare: he could only say, as he had said, that there was one thing in which all his Majesty's ministers were agreed, to change the plan of the war, but not to withdraw the troops from America. An honourable gentleman [Mr. Fox] had stated a declaration made by him on the subject of the American war some time since; so far was he from having changed his opinion on the subject, that he would then repeat what he had formerly said, and apply it to the motion at that time under consideration. As he had already declared he regarded the motion, as amounting to a resolution to abandon the American war altogether, he made no scruple to avow, that if the House came into it, he would immediately retire; for be the consequence what it might, he never would be the minister to sign any instrument which gave independence to America. His opinion ever had been, and his opinion then was, that the moment the House acknowledged the independence of America the British empire was ruined. This nation never could exist as a great and a powerful people, unless our sovereign was likewise the sovereign of America. This was a position he maintained from

from the clearest conviction, and he had rather abide the censure of that House than be the instrument of injuring the constitution of this country. By his hands the constitution should never fall; and when the moment arrived, that the House should resolve on the independence of America, he would instantly withdraw, because he was determined from principle to leave the people their country.—[Mr. Byng said across the House, “you will leave us no country.”] Lord George complained of the interruption, and said, “if the honourable gentleman thinks himself warranted so to do, let him impeach me! I am not conscious of having ever intentionally in any one instance done wrong since I have held my situation, but I wish most heartily, that if a change of ministers is aimed at, and thought necessary, it may be done in the true constitutional way. Do not call the people together without doors, and tell them that ministers ought to be changed, but let this House with the dignity becoming its character and its true importance adopt at once the constitutional measure. Let them address the throne upon it, and every gentleman present knows the purpose cannot fail of being answered; let ministers be dismissed, be impeached, be punished, if they shall be found to merit it, but do not out of mere party spirit injure the constitution, and risk the ruin of the country.”

Mr. Byng rose in consequence of what he had said, avowed it, and declared he was ready to avow and to declare his opinion to that House, and to all the world, that the noble Lord would by the prosecution of his system leave us no country when he chose to retire from his office. The noble Lord says, “impeach me then; why do you not impeach me.” Let the noble Lord look round him and he will see the reasons why he is not impeached. He will see a band of hired men ready to support him, or any minister who will pay them, against all the consequences of the American war. Give us an honest Parliament; and then let us see if the noble Lord would desire to find his security in impeachment.

Mr. Thomas Pitt strongly urged the propriety of adopting the propositions of the honourable Baronet, and of giving to their constituents and their country a convincing testimony that they were determined no longer to support his Majesty's ministers in the mad and ruinous war in which they had involved us.

Sir John
Wrottesley.

Sir *John Wrottesley* said, he should vote against the motion in consequence of what had fallen from the noble Lord in the blue ribband. Sir John advised the House to come to no resolution on the subject till Lord Cornwallis was at home to represent the real state of the country, and to give them some authentic information as to the practicability of the war. Sir John complained of the want of firmness in ministers, charging them with having neither rewarded merit nor punished delinquency during the whole seven years of the war. He also assured the House, that they had repeatedly been grossly deceived, as to the reputed number of the Americans, who were the friends of government.

Sir J. H.
Delaval.

Sir *John Hussey Delaval* spoke to the same effect. If the noble Lord had not given the assurance which he did, he would not have voted for the motions proposed, but he would have objected to the carrying on of the war. He thought the declaration in the motions no longer to continue the war was too indefinite. How, without some force, could our remaining possessions be defended? We might entertain more reasonable expectations of extricating ourselves from our difficulties, by a spirited exertion, than by a supine dependency. He felt in common, with other gentlemen, the burthens of the war, the weight of taxes, the decrease in the value of lands, and all the other evils thereof. He wished, in the present posture of affairs, every gentleman would resolve to give his best assistance to the putting an end to the American war, but hoped that the House would not make so timid a declaration, as that we will not any longer carry it on; he thought it was wise, and necessary, to abandon it, but it would be imprudent and impolitic to declare it by a vote of the House.

Mr. Dun-
ning.

Mr. *Dunning* spoke next, and with great poignancy compared and exposed the various arguments of his Majesty's ministers. He was not ready, he said, to give up the dependency of America. He thought that the ruin of this country was accomplished when America was acknowledged to be independent. He agreed with Colonel Barré, that it was not possible to tell what posts should be kept, and what should be abandoned. They had the intelligence, and they knew best, but he thought that our troops should not be withdrawn without great consideration, and that we should be cautious how we decided upon a measure so big with the fate of the empire. The noble Lord's language was not explicit; we were not to have such a war as we have had, but

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we were not told what war we were now to have. He concluded his speech with earnestly calling on Lord North to rise again, and explain his words more fully, as different gentlemen had declared, that they had understood him differently.

Mr. Turner spoke also in favour of the motion, and said, Mr. Turner, he had always wished the Americans success, and was pleased, when he heard of Lord Cornwallis's defeat and capture, as he hoped that would put an end to our further persecuting our fellow subjects. He said the Americans ought to be treated as men treated their pointers. Who ever heard of breaking a pointer by force? Every body knew the only way was to coax the animal, and intice him to do his duty.

At two in the morning the House divided on the question for the order of the day being read. Ayes, for the order of the day, 220; noes, 179.

The business of the Army estimates was then, by agreement, adjourned to Friday; and the House rose immediately.

*A list of the division on Sir James Lowther's motion.**

<i>Against the Order.</i>	<i>Bedfordshire.</i>	<i>For the Order.</i>
Earl of Upper Ossory —	County —	
Hon. St. A. St. John —	Ditto —	
Sir William Wake —	Bedford —	Samuel Whitbread
	<i>Berks.</i>	
J. Elwys, —	County —	
W. H. Hartley —	Ditto —	
Fra. Annesley —	Reading —	J. Dodd
	Abingdon —	J. Mayor
Hon. J. Montagu —	Windfor —	Pen. Port. Powney
J. Aubrey —	Wallingford —	
Cha. Arcedeckne —	Ditto —	
	<i>Bucks.</i>	
Earl Verney —	County —	
J. Grenville —	Buckingham —	
Lord Mahon —	Wycombe —	Rt. Waller
	Aylesbury —	T. Ord
	Marlow —	Wm. Clayton
	Ditto —	Sir J. B. Warren
Richard Smith —	Wendover —	
	Agmondesham —	Wm. Drake, sen.
	<i>Cambridgehire.</i>	

* Lord North moved for the order of the day; so that the division took place upon the order, and not on the original motion; and by this means the motion was prevented from appearing on the Journals.

<i>Against the Order.</i>		<i>Cambridgeshire.</i>	<i>For the Order.</i>
Hon. J. Townshend	—	County —	Phil. Yorke
Benjamin Keene	—	University —	Ja. Mansfield
		Cambridge	
		<i>Cheshire.</i>	
Sir R. S. Cotton	—	County	
J. Crewe	—	Ditto	
Rd. Wil. Beale	—	Cheshire	
		<i>Cornwall.</i>	
Sir William Lemon	—	County	
Edward Eliot	—	Ditto	
		Launceston	Hon. C. G. Perceval
		Ditto	T. Bowlby
Samuel Salt	—	Liskeard	
Hon. Wilbr. Tollemache	—	Ditto	
		Leithwicke	Lord Malden
		Truro	Bamber Gascoyne
		Ditto	Hen. Rosewarne
Geo. Hunt	—	Bodmyn	
		Helston	Lord Hyde
		Salisbury	Sir Grey Cooper
		Ditto	Rt. Hon. Chas. Jenkinson
		Eastloze	J. Buller
		Ditto	William Graves
		Westloze	Sir William Jervis
Thomas Lucas	—	Grampound	
		Camelford	J. Pardoe, jun.
		Ditto	J. Macpherson
		Tregony	J. Stephenson
		Ditto	J. Dawes
		St. Ives	William Praed
		Ditto	Abel Smith
		Fowey	Lord Shuldham
Edward James Eliot	—	St. Germans	
Dudley Long	—	Ditto	
		St. Michael	Hon. Wm. Hanger
		Ditto	Francis Hale
Lord Maitland	—	Newquay	J. Coghill
		St. John	Lord Nugent
		Callington	George Stratton
		Ditto	J. Mordaunt

*Against the Order.**Cumberland continued.**For the Order.*

William Lowther —
J. Lowther —
J. B. Garforth —

Carlisle
Cockermouth
Ditto

Derbyshire.

Lord G. Cavendish —
Lord G. H. Cavendish —
Edward Coke —

County —
Derby
Ditto

Hon. Nat. Carnon

Devonshire.

J. Parker —
Humphry Minchin —
Sir G. Yonge —
Jacob Wilkinfon —

County —
Athburton —
Oakhampton
Honiton
Ditto

J. Rolle
Charles Boone

Plymouth —
Ditto —
Beeralston —
Ditto —
Plympton —
Ditto —
Totness —
Barnstable —
Ditto —
Tavistock —

Sir Fred. Rogers
Admiral Darby
Lord Fielding
Lawrence Coxe
Sir Ralph Payne
Hon. James Stuart
Laun. Browne
J. Cleveland
Fran. Basset
Rt. Hon. Rd. Rigby

Dorsetshire.

Humph. Sturt —

County
Lyme Regis —
Weymouth and
Melcombe Regis }
Ditto —
Ditto —
Ditto —
Dorchester —
Bridport
Ditto

David R. Mitchell
Rt. Hon. W. Ellis
John Purling
Gabriel Steward
Wm. Rd. Rumbold
William Ewer

Thomas Scott —
Richard Beckford —

Shaftesbury —
Ditto —
Wareham —
Corfe Castle —
Poole —

Sir Francis Sykes
H. W. Mortimer
J. Boyd
J. Bond
Joseph Gulton

Thomas Farrer —
n. Bankes —
William Morton Pitt

Durham.

Tempest —

Durham

Essex, or Yorkshire.

George Savile —
Glancombe —

County
Ditto
Aldborough —

Charles Mellish

so explicit, and if he had seemed to have inclined to prosecute the old system. But having said this, he was satisfied. He relied in the noble Lord's declaration; both from the high opinion which he had of his veracity, as well as from seeing that the declaration was confirmed by the estimates on the table. The mode of the war therefore was to be totally changed; but were the House ready to do what the last honourable gentleman advised, to abandon America totally, to give up all our posts, to withdraw all our troops, to deprive ourselves even of the advantages of chance, and in short to suffer America calmly and composedly to rivet her connection with France. He believed the House was not yet ready to go this length. He was willing openly to avow that in the former periods of this contest he entertained different sentiments of the event; but fatal experience had convinced him of the impracticability of reducing America to obedience by these means which we had pursued. He was for changing the mode but not for relinquishing the object.—The learned Lord concluded his speech with saying, that he had a very sincere friendship and regard for the noble Lord in the blue ribband. He believed him to be actuated in all his measures by the purest zeal for the service of his country. His opinion was of him, that he only wanted one quality to make him a most distinguished and commanding minister; he meant despotism and violence of temper; as to his private virtues, they were the subject of general admiration. The learned Lord was stopped in his panegyric by the noise of the hear hims, and of the laughs to which these expressions gave rise.

Mr. Burke. Mr. *Burke* made some facetious observations on the elegance of the learned Lord's panegyric, and on the unfortunate reception with which it had met. He was sorry, that after having suffered so much under the noble Lord's administration, the House was not in the humour to hear his panegyric. It would no doubt, have been honourable to both parties; for the brilliancy of the noble Lord's character could only have been equalled by the sincerity of the learned Lord's praise. He said, that the only alteration which was promised to Parliament that day, and to the nation was, that the mode of the war should be changed. An American war you must have; but because you have grown dissatisfied with the manner in which it has hitherto been carried on, we will change the plan, we will give you another plan, but it shall be the same war; we have squandered seventy millions in one way, we shall now squander

<i>Against the Order.</i>		<i>Huntingdonshire.</i>	<i>For the Order.</i>
Earl Ludlow	—	County —	Lord Visc. Hinchin- broke
		Huntingdon —	Lord Mulgrave
		Ditto — —	Sir Hugh Palliser
		<i>Kent.</i>	
Hon. Chas. Marshall	—	County	
Robert Gregory	—	Rocheſter — —	G. F. Hatton
		Queenſborough	Sir C. Frederick
Sir Hor. Mann	—	Ditto — —	Sir Walter Rawlinſon
Clement Taylor	—	Maidſtone	
Charles Robinſon	—	Ditto	
		Canterbury	
		<i>LANCAſHIRE.</i>	
Thomas Stanley	— —	County	
Wilſon Braddyll	—	Lancaſter —	Abr. Rawlinſon
J. Burgoyne	—	Preſton	
		Liverpool — —	Bamber Gaſcoyne
		Ditto —	Henry Rawlinſon
Hon. Hor. Walpole	—	Wigan	
Thomas Liſter	— —	Clitheroe	
		Newton — —	T. Davenport
		<i>Leiceſterſhire.</i>	
William Poehin	— —	County —	J. P. Hungerford
		<i>Lincolnſhire.</i>	
Sir J. Thorold	— —	County	
C. A. Pelham	— —	Ditto	
Sir T. Clarges	— —	Lincoln —	Rt. Vyner
J. Harriſon	— —	Grimſby —	Francis Eyre
		Bolton —	Humphrey Sibthorpe
George Sutton	—	Grantham — —	F. C. Cuſt
		Stamford —	Sir G. Howard
		<i>Middleſex.</i>	
John Wilkes	— —	County	
Nat. Newnham	—	London	
Sir Watkin Lewes	—	Ditto	
Hon. C. J. Fox	—	Westmiſter	
		<i>Monmouthſhire.</i>	
		Monmouth — —	Sir T. Stepney
		<i>Norfolk.</i>	
Sir Edward Aſtley	—	County	
T. W. Coke	— —	Ditto	
Hon. Richard Walpole	—	Yarmouth — —	Rt. Hon. Ch. Townſhend
Richard Hopkins	—	Thetford	
Vql. V.		X	Sir

<i>Against the Order.</i>	<i>Norfolk continued</i>	<i>For the Order.</i>
Sir H. Harbord — — —	Castle Rising -	J. C. Talbot
	Ditto — —	Rt. Mackreth
	Norwich	
	<i>Northamptonshire.</i>	
Lucy Knightley — —	County	
Thomas Powys — —	Ditto	
Richard Benyon — —	Peterborough	
Lord Althorpe — —	Northampton -	George Rodney
	Brackley — —	Timothy Cafwell
Frederick Montagu —	Higham Ferrers	
	<i>Northumberland.</i>	
	Morpeth — —	Peter Delme
A. R. Bowes — — —	Ditto — —	Anthony Storer
	Newcastle	
	Berwick — —	Sir J. Hussy Delaval
	Ditto — —	Hon. J. Vaughan
	<i>Nottinghamshire.</i>	
	Nottingham -	Dr. Parker Coke
	<i>Oxfordshire.</i>	
Lord Wenman — —	County — —	Lord Charles Spencer
	University — —	Sir William Dolben
Lord Robert Spencer —	Oxford	
	Woodstock	Lord Parker
	Banbury — —	Lord North
	<i>Rutlandshire.</i>	
	County — —	G. B. Brudenell
	<i>Shropshire.</i>	
Noel Hill — — —	County	
Richard Hill — —	Ditto	
Sir Charlton Leighton —	Shrewsbury —	William Pulteney
	Ludlow — —	Lord Clive
Hugh Pigot — — —	Bridgenorth	
	Bishop's Castle -	Henry Strachey
	Ditto — —	William Clive
	<i>Somersetshire.</i>	
	Taunton — —	J. Halliday
	Ilchester - -	Samuel Smith
	Milbourn-Port	J. Pennington
	Ditto — —	J. Townson
	Bridgwater - -	Hon. A. Poulett
Hon. J. Jeff. Pratt — —	Bath - - -	Abel Moysey
	Minehead - -	F. Fownes Luttrell
	Bristol - - -	Mat. Brickdale
	Ditto - - -	G. Daubeny

Rob.

<i>Against the Order.</i>	<i>Hants.</i>	<i>For the Order.</i>
Rob. Thistlethwayte —	County	
Jer. Clarke Jervoise —	Ditto	
	Winchester —	Lord Stanhope
	Ditto —	Henry Peaton
	Portsmouth —	Sir William Gordon
	Newport —	Hon. J. St. John
Edward Morant —	Yarmouth —	Sir Thomas Rumbold
J. Barrington —	Newton —	
	Lymington —	J. Frederick
Sir J. Griffin Griffin	Andover —	
Benjamin Lethieullier	Ditto —	
Lord Viscount Middleton	Whitechurch —	
	Petersfield —	William Jolliffe
	Ditto —	Thomas Sam. Jolliffe
	Stockbridge —	Hon. J. Luttrell
	Southampton —	Hans Sloane
	Ditto —	J. Fuller.
	<i>Staffordshire.</i>	
	County —	Lord Lewisham
	Ditto —	J. Wrottesley
Richard B. Sheridan —	Stafford	
Hon. E. Monckton —	Ditto	
	Tamworth —	J. Calvert sen.
	Ditto —	J. Courteney
	Lichfield —	T. Gilbert
	<i>Suffolk.</i>	
Sir Cha. Bunbury —	County	
Thomas Staunton —	Ipswich	
Sir G. W. Van Neck —	Dunwich	
	Orford —	Lord Beauchamp
	Ditto —	Hon. Robert S. Conway
	Aldborough —	Martyn Fonnereau
	Ditto —	Phil. Chan. Crespigny
	Sudbury —	Sir Patrick Blake
	Ditto —	Sir James Marriott
	Eye	Rd. Phillipson
Sir C. Davers —	St. Edmonsbury	
Rt. Hon. H. S. Conway	Ditto	
	<i>Surrey.</i>	
Hon. Admiral Keppel —	County	
Sir Joseph Mawbey —	Ditto	
	Gatton —	Lord Newhaven
	Ditto —	Robert Mayne
Edward Norton —	Haslemere	
Walter Spen. Stanhope —	Ditto	
	X 2	

Against the Order.

Sir Robert Clayton —
 Right Hon. Sir F. Norton
 Sir Rich. Hoatham —

Surrey continued.

Blechingly —
 Ryegate —
 Guildford —
 Southwark

For the Order.

J. Kentick
 Hon. J. Yorke
 George Onflow

Suffex.

Lord G. Lenox —
 Hon. T. Pelham —

County
 Ditto
 Horsham —
 Ditto —
 Bramber
 Shoreham —
 Midhurst —
 Ditto —
 East Grinstead —

James Wallace
 Sir G. Osborne

Tho. Thoroton —

Sir C. Bistopp
 Sir S. Gideon
 Hen. Drummond
 Lord G. Germain

Sir T. G. Skipwith —
 J. Bullock —

Steyning
 Ditto
 Arundel —
 Lewes —

T. Fitzherbert
 Hon. Hen. Pelham

Tho. Kemp —

Warwickshire.

Sir R. Lawley —
 Robert Ladbroke —

County
 Warwick —
 Coventry —
 Ditto —

Hon. C. E. Greville
 Lord Sheffield
 Edward Roe Yeo

Westmoreland.

James Lowther —
 Phil. Honywood —
 Hon. William Pitt —

County
 Appleby
 Ditto

Wills.

Ambrose Goddard —
 William Hufsey —

County —
 Salisbury
 Devizes —
 Ditto —

C. Penruddock

Hen. Dawkins —
 J. Dunning —
 Right Hon. I. Barré —

Marlborough —
 Chippenham —
 Calne
 Ditto

Sir James Long
 Henry Jones
 Earl of Courtown
 Giles Hudson

Lloyd Kenyon —
 Thomas Pitt —
 Pinckney Wilkinfon —
 W. P. A'Court —
 Sam. Edwick —
 J. Whalley Gardiner —

Malmesbury —
 Ditto —
 Hindon —
 Old Sarum
 Ditto
 Heytesbury —
 Westbury
 Ditto

Lord Fairford
 J. Calvert, junior
 Nat. Wraxhall

Francis Burton

Against the Order.

Lord Herbert — —

Hon. Edward Foley —

William Lygon —

Sir J. Rushout —

C. W. B. Rouse —

Edward Winnington —

T. Bates Rous —

J. Trevanion —

Lord Viscount Bulkeley

Sir G. Warren —

J. Parry —

Watkin Williams —

Charles Edwin —

W. M. Owen —

Wilt continued.

Wootton Bassett

Ditto —

Luggershall —

Ditto —

Wilton —

Downton —

Ditto —

Worcestershire.

County

Ditto

Evesham

Ditto

Droitwich

Bewdley —

Worcester —

Cinque Ports.

Hastings —

Ditto —

Sandwich —

Ditto —

Dover —

Romney —

Rye —

Ditto —

Winchelsea —

Seaford —

Wales.

Anglesea

Beaumaris

Brecon —

Cardiganhire —

Cardigan

Caernarvonshire

Caernarvon —

Flint

Glamorganshire

Cardiff —

Montgomerysh.

Montgomery —

Pembroke —

Haverford-west

Radnorshire —

Radnor —

For the Order.

Hon. H. St. John

William Strahan

Lord Melbourne

G. Aug. Selwyn

Hon. H. S. Conway

Robert Shaftoe

Lord Westcote

Hon. William Ward

Lord Palmerston

J. Ord

Phil. Stephens

Sir Richard Sutton

Sir J. Henniker

Sir Edward Dering

Hon. T. Onslow

William Dickenson

J. Nesbitt

J. Durand

Sir C. Gould

Lord Lisburne

J. Campbell

Glynn Wynn

Sir Her. Mackworth

Whit. Keene

Hugh Owen

Lord Kenington

Thomas Johnes

Edward Lewis

Charles

*Against the Order.**Scotland.**For the Order.*

Charles Dundas —

Sir Thomas Dundas —

Right Hon. T. Townshend
Geo. Byng

Kintore, Elgin, &c.	Staates Long Morris
Airshire —	Sir Adam Ferguson
Irvine, &c. —	Sir A. Edmonstone
Argyllshire —	Lord Fred. Campbell
Berwickshire -	Hugh Scott
Lauder, &c. -	Francis Chartris
Caithnesshire -	J. Sinclair
Dumbarton, &c.	J. Crauford
Dumfriesshire -	Sir Robert Laurie
Dumfries, &c. -	Sir Robert Herries
Edinburghshire	Henry Dundas
Fifehire —	Robert Skene
Anstruther, &c.	Sir J. Anstruther
Aberbrothock, &c.	Ad. Drummond
Haddingtonsh.	Hugh Dalrymple
Invernesshire -	Simon Frazer
Kincardineshire	Lord A. Gordon
Kirkcudbrightsh.	John Gordon
Kinrosshire -	Geo. Graham
Lanarkshire -	A. Stuart
Linlithgowshire	Sir W. Cunynghame
Nairnshire —	George Ross
Orkneyshire -	
Rosshire —	Hon. James Murray
Roxburghshire -	Sir G. Elliot
Selkirkshire -	J. Pringle
Selkirk, &c. -	Sir James Cockburn
Stirlingshire -	
Wigtown —	William Adam

Tellers.

Whitchurch	
Middlesex	
Harwich —	J. Robinson
Newcastle —	Archibald M'Donald,

December 13.

No debate.

December 14.

The House went into a Committee of Supply, and the estimates of the army were referred to them.

Secretary at
War,

Mr. Secretary at War entered into the detail of the army estimates for the current year. He stated, that the whole force of the army, including the militia of this kingdom, amounted at that time to 186,220 men, and for this force the Parliament had to provide. The expence was 4,208,097l.

2s. 5d $\frac{1}{2}$. This force, he said, was, in the whole, greater than that of the last year by 4074 men; and the expence was consequently greater by 29,067l. 15s. This increase was occasioned by the greater number of troops already sent, or now going to the East-Indies. The corps on that service, or appointed to it, and on the eve of embarkation amounted in the whole to 9436, being an expence of 176,784l. whereas the last year there was only one corps there, the regiment of Lord Macleod. The right honourable gentleman went into a minute statement of the difference that there was in every article between the force of this year and the last. The difference upon the whole, in guards and garrisons, was very trifling; and it chiefly arose from the circumstance of the troops, held under the convention of Saratoga, being sent back to this country, and put from one establishment to another. From the total amount of the troops, effective and non-effective, there were to be taken the non-effectives, the account of which was upon the table. The whole of the rank and file, excluding the commission and the warrant officers, was about 157,000; but from this the House was to take the non-effectives, which amounted to 26490, that was to about a seventh part of the whole. He said, that in the course of the last year, about 10,000 men were raised by the recruiting service; by the mode which was adopted of additional companies about half of them were got, and the other half by the old corps; but he was sorry to say, that they were got with much difficulty, and the men were very much lowered in quality, but they had all been inspected by general officers, and the reports had been accurate. The mode which had been adopted last year of lowering the establishments of reduced regiments had been attended with great benefit, but still undoubtedly some regiments were short of their complement, and the House was to grant more money than would be expended upon that service. It was not lost, though voted for this purpose. It came back to the national purse, and was brought to account with fidelity and expedition. The corps which were most under the establishment were those which had been held under the convention of Saratoga, and those in the West-Indies. Many lives had been lost by the expeditions to the Spanish main, and in the island of St. Lucia not less than 2000 men had died in eighteen months. He was happy to say that they were now better accommodated, as barracks were erected for them, which protected them from the injuries of the climate. The right honourable

gentleman, after going through his estimates, concluded with moving, as the first of his string of motions. "That a number of land forces, including 4175 invalids, amounting to 49,455 effective men, commission and non-commission officers included, be employed for the year 1782."*

Col. Barré. Colonel Barré spoke with his usual ability upon the subject of the army management. The right honourable gentleman, he said, had stated the number of men, non-effectives, to be about one seventh of the whole army. The statement, however, was not made with his usual accuracy; they were more than one seventh; for the total number of forces was stated to be 186,000; from these take, says he, the commission and non-commission officers, and the number is reduced to 157,000. From these take the militia, and the number is reduced to less than 130,000. From this number it is, that the non-effectives, amounting, by the paper on the table, to 26,490, are to be taken and the House will find that it is about one fifth of the whole. But what the right hon. gentleman principally objected to was, the voting so much more money than was really to be applied, or was wanted for the army. It was the use, but it was a bad habit. The commissioners declared it to be a bad, uneconomical habit, to send money into the pay-master's office, there to lie unemployed. It was true it came back, but the commissioners had said well, that every guinea so issued and returned was sweated and Judaized in the passage. It did not come back as it went, one pound one. To see some regiments charged 800 men that really did not consist of 100, and some that did not consist of 50 set down at 5, 6, 7, or 800 men in the estimate, was a mockery of Parliament. He knew that in every quarter of the world our forces were much more upon paper than they were in the field, by which means we were induced to have confidence where we ought to have distrust. We had two garrisons besieged, Gibraltar and Minorca. In Gibraltar there was said to be 5000 men; in Minorca 3500. He could assure the House there was no such thing. He was exceedingly anxious for those places. He was apprehensive for them, but he did not fear the Spaniards. He repeated it, he was apprehensive for them, and he was not afraid of the Spaniards, nor of the French. They were deceived into a vote under the idea of their having a great commanding army, and when they came to the proof, they found that they had an army upon paper only. The royal English fusiliers were in the predicament which he had

* This first vote is the number of troops employed for guards and garrisons.

had stated; so were the royal Scotch fuzileers, and so were twenty regiments more which he could state, but that it was not a delicate thing to enumerate them. He was always against voting away useless money in this manner, and the House ought to be particularly so at this moment, when exertion was so necessary, and when surely we had need of all the money that we could raise. His Majesty's ministers refused the offer of a larger supply than they called for towards enlarging the favourite service of their country, because they said we must study oeconomy; and here they moved for a larger sum than was really wanted in a service which certainly was not the favourite service. He had blamed his Majesty's ministers on the framing of the army-estimates, for what they did contain: he would now blame them for what they did not contain. He had the highest reverence for the army, though he did not belong to the profession, but still he wished that no forces should subsist under the command of the crown, which were not regularly before that House, upon estimate, and provided for in the regular constitutional way. But there were, and had been for several years, 9000 men in arms in America, under the name of Provincials, which the ministry had never thought proper to bring before the House in estimate, though called upon year after year for that purpose. It was very natural to suppose that they were in America, as they were here; they were deficient, and we paid for men that had no existence.

The House did not know by the estimates before them, and they could not know what was the army of Britain. The ministry brought it out in various shapes. The 9000 in America were to be added to it; 5000 artillery men were to be added. The force of the country came in various shapes, but there was none so insidious or so unsufferable, as when they came under extraordinaries, where there had been no estimate.

Mr. Hussy said that the management of the army was exceedingly defective in many ways, and in none more than in the practice of giving appointments of importance to boys over the heads of senior, veteran, and worthy officers; and in raising new regiments and independent companies, when the old corps were very incomplete. He said, it was a fact that there were boys made captains, and appointed to command lieutenants and ensigns who were in the service before they were born. The lieutenant and the ensign of many of these new-fangled regiments had been in the service

Mr. Hussy.

of their country before the captain appointed to command them was born. This was a fact. He knew an instance of it. A relation of his now in America, had continued a lieutenant upwards of eighteen years; and several of the captains of these independent companies were not arrived to their eighteenth year. Besides, this method was very expensive. To each of these independent companies three officers were appointed, their pay was eighteen shillings and four pence per day, their half-pay nine shillings and two-pence. Allowing that they were disbanded in a short time, and the officers put upon half-pay, the sum would be considerable, for their half pay would at least be ten years purchase. All this might have been saved, as the old corps and old companies ought to have been filled up. It was right for the House to know how all this mismanagement arose, and how such flagrant instances of abuse had occurred; and that they might receive information upon this point, he moved that Mr. Ord should leave the chair and report progress.

The hon.
John Luttrell.

The honourable *John Luttrell* said, if the order of that day, or of many other days, was to be strictly adhered to by the House, he should find it unnecessary, and he should think it presumption to trouble them for one moment with his sentiments on a motion for military supply, because he had a very superficial knowledge of that service, and he was therefore persuaded, that almost every member within his hearing was more equal to the task of debating such a subject than himself: but he observed that the present motion for an army supply having followed the navy, which was voted at an earlier period than he expected it, and not having any intimation of the intention, he was unfortunately absent at the time, or he would then have endeavoured to disperse the mist which had been cast before the eyes of Parliament, and in which he feared many of the members had ever since been lost; for that he was almost persuaded, the desponding motion made by an honourable baronet, proceeded from some such cause, as in the course of that debate a melancholy description was drawn of our present naval armament: and that a right honourable member who had just spoken before him, declared when the House parted the other night, that it was the weak, the wretched condition of our fleet, which induced him to make a motion for the returns of the army; at so late an hour of the night he could not presume to trouble the House with a discussion of that subject: he thought it would be still more improper to enter upon it then; but so far

far he thought himself called upon to say, that when the next naval question came to be agitated, he did not despair of making it appear in the broad face of day, that we had still the ability to make a glorious struggle at sea, even with those nations which had directly or indirectly taken part against us; he said France, Spain, Holland, and America, were at open war; that their trade had been protected; that they had been furnished with arms, ammunition, military stores, and almost every other engine which seemed to threaten our destruction, under the sanction of flags, who deemed themselves the armed neutrality; but that in his acceptance of their conduct, they merited no better appellation than a cursed confederacy, calculated to humble the pride and the glory of this country; how therefore to avert the impending blow, and render such machinations subtile, was not only the business of the House, but ought to engage the daily attention of every subject who wished to see the British arms appear respectable in the eyes of Europe; he said, that at the present time he should enter no further on the business of the navy, and would say but one word on that of America, until the subject should come more properly before the House than he then considered it to do, namely, that he had lent his treble aid to put out the first spark of fire which had been kindled in that House, and which lighted up the American war; that he had exerted all his powers to quench the flame as it increased, and that he should continue his best endeavours to put the best end, we consistently could do, to so destructive a contest; that he was happy to find all his Majesty's ministers, the secretary for the American department excepted, were come to their senses, and he had sanguine hopes that noble Lord would not have the power to do more mischief; he, therefore, was unwilling to withhold from government the means of endeavouring to make a tolerable peace for this country, and he thought they were much more likely to accomplish that end with arms in their hands than by surrendering all their posts, and submitting to the arbitrary dictates of the haughty House of Bourbon; that, however humiliating he should feel it, whenever that hour came, which, in his opinion, made it necessary and wise to declare, that all further attempts, either by sea or land then, or hereafter, to enforce the obedience of the revolted colonies to this country, must prove ruinous and ineffectual; he would not look for vague and ambiguous terms to express his sentiments in, but this he would then declare, in language which could not be misunderstood, he was prepared

pared to wave the dependence of America on this country; for, he declared, however ingeniously it was penned, had he given his vote in favour of Sir James Lowther's motion, he should have thought that in force, effect, and substance, it would have amounted to such a declaration, and what little form would have been wanting, he should not have thought material; but he hoped the political hemisphere was not yet so dark as not to shew a glimmering light, which would lead to an advantageous peace to this country and to America also; that was the light he thought every body should follow, but at the same time, be properly prepared for their defence if it deceived us; therefore he readily consented to grant the supply asked for by the Secretary at War; for he was convinced, that the army of this country was as necessary towards the conquests and defence of this country as the navy; he was always sorry when he heard either stiled the favourite service, because he was sure they were never so useful or formidable as when acting in concert and upon equal terms; and he thought that professional men, of all others, should avoid making a distinction. He said, no man lamented the continuance of the American war more than he did; that he was truly sorry the present situation of public affairs called for so large a supply of both navy and army, but being persuaded they were equally necessary, and the one having been voted, he should certainly give his vote for the other.

Mr. T.
Townshend

Mr. Thomas Townshend was exceedingly happy to hear from such high authority as that of the honourable captain, that our navy was in so prosperous and able a state, for he and the House had been told from authority pretty respectable, from the Admiralty, that the navy was and must be inferior to that of the House of Bourbon. He was happy to hear from the gallant officer, that the Admiralty in this point were wrong, as they were in many others, and that they were ignorant of the affairs and of the strength of their country. But which of the two the people would be inclined to believe in preference to the other, the Lords of the Admiralty, or the captain of a ship, it was not possible for him to tell. He had said that all the ministers had come to their senses, except the secretary for the American department. What particular instances of sanity he had discovered in the rest, he could not take upon him to say; he wished that he had explained himself upon that head. Had they recovered their senses, because they concurred with the American

American secretary in rejecting the proposition made the other day for putting an end to the American war? Or had they shewn any disposition different from that of the noble Lord, which exempted them from the insanity in which he was involved? He professed he could not tell. The only two confidential servants of his Majesty who sat in that House, had differed in their language; the one the American secretary, had spoken out, and had said boldly the American war must be carried on. The other, the noble Lord in the blue ribband, gave a loose and vague opinion about the mode of carrying on a half war. They disagreed.

From these observations, he adverted to the estimates, having by the way, expressed a marked preference for the naval, over the land service, in opposition to Mr. Luttrell's opinion; he found fault with the manner in which the troops that had perished at St. Lucia had been sent out, without clothing, without arms, crowded in the transports; and landed in an island where there were no barracks to receive them; but were raw, and uninured to the climate, they had been obliged to work in building barracks till their constitutions were worn out, and they sunk under the weight of labour and the unwholesomeness of the climate: such work was not fit for the European constitution in the West-Indies; this was discovered, though a little too late to save thousands; but since the discovery, General St. Leger had employed the negroes, and not the soldiers in those kind of works, by which means the lives of hundreds had been since saved. As to the independent companies, he must needs say, that if men were promoted out of their turn, he was much better pleased that it should be to the command of companies than of regiments, as had of late been the practice; but of the independent companies themselves, he had seen some of them; some came from Ireland, where they were raised, and men looked clever, able fellows; but others, which had been raised in England, were the greatest burlesque upon soldiers that he had ever seen: some had been quartered in his own neighbourhood; and he could safely say that there was no walking through them without bursting into laughter, so grotesque, awkward, and ridiculous was their appearance. When they were ordered to march to Portsmouth, the country was all over covered with them; some were not able to march from impediments of long standing; one man in particular, whom he had seen, had his leg swelled in consequence of a scurvy contracted at sea twenty-five years ago. Such were the kind
of

of men, or rather scare-crows, that composed those independent companies.

As to the motion for leaving the chair, he did not suppose the honourable member who had made it, would divide the committee upon it: for his own part, he condemned many things in the estimates; but still he did not wish to stop the supply.

Lord G.
Germain.

Lord *George Germain* rose next, to explain what he had said on Wednesday, and to confirm, by his present explanation, the opinion he had then given: he said, that he had already said, and was fully convinced, that if the sovereignty of Great-Britain over America was lost, this country, from that moment, would be undone; this being his opinion, he was determined never to have a hand in any measure by which that sovereignty should be given up; this was his opinion at present, it always had been, and ever would be, his firm opinion to his last breath; and if this was the reason why the honourable gentleman had thought proper to say that he had not yet recovered his senses, he did assure him that he never would recover them, for in that opinion he would die; with regard to the sentiments of the cabinet, respecting the further prosecution of the war, he had said this much, and this much only, that all his Majesty's ministers were unanimously of opinion, that under the present circumstances and pressure of affairs, it would not be for the public good to withdraw the forces from America; in this opinion he had concurred, in this opinion all his Majesty's ministers had concurred. His Lordship then passed to another subject.

With respect to the provincial corps, he said, that the reason why they had not been included in the estimates, was, that some share of the public money might be spared, by avoiding to vote an establishment for these troops: at present they were paid according to muster; and not one farthing pay was issued, but to those who stood muster; and for this purpose they were regularly and frequently mustered: hence this beneficial consequence ensued, that none were paid but effective men, standing in their shoes; but if they were voted on establishment, this establishment must be at a certain fixed number, and for the whole of this number money must be sent over to America: and it would be a difficult matter to get back the money arising from stoppages for non-effective men; but all this was avoided by paying only for those who regularly muster; their numbers were

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well known, he had in his hand two returns of these corps, the one dated in August last, from the inspector of the provincial troops; the other, from Sir Henry Clinton in his gross return of the whole force; and this was dated in September; both accounts differed in about two hundred men; these returns he was ready to lay before the committee, if forms would permit it; or to shew to gentlemen who should think proper to read them; nothing, he said, had been omitted to render these corps as little burthenfome to the public as possible; nay, their very clothing was sent from hence, nor had their commanders the benefit of supplying it.

Colonel Barré said he should certainly call for them; but Col. Barré. though there might be some little œconomy in keeping back the estimate of those corps, he must say that he preferred the constitution to œconomy.

Mr. Fox said, he should only detain the committee for a Mr. Fox. few minutes, and he wished to say what he had to offer immediately, before the matter that had called him up should be forgotten. An honourable gentleman had said, that the Ministry, (the secretary of state for the American department excepted) had returned to their senses. He was very sorry to hear, that the only minister who had not come to his senses, was the minister who had the conduct of that war which was the cause of all our misfortunes. But the honourable gentleman doubted very much whether the noble Lord was the only one that had not returned to his senses. He had indeed declared, that the war in America was still to be carried on, but another noble Lord (Lord North) had also made the same declaration, though in a more qualified way. But the matter to which he wished to speak, was a circumstance which he had forgot the other night, but which he had remembered since. The noble Lord in the blue ribbon had said, in opposition to the motion that was made for putting an end to the American war, that it was to be carried on upon a contracted scale, and on a much more limited plan than it had been hitherto. It was a fact, and the House must remember it; at least he was sure the noble Lord himself must, that four years ago, when a motion was made for putting an end to this accursed and fatal war, the noble Lord said that it would be continued, but it would be continued upon a contracted scale. Exactly as now, the noble Lord had told the House that it was to be altered, to be diminished, to be contracted; and the House was imposed upon. It was not possible for the noble Lord to forget this assertion,

assertion, but he would mention to him a circumstance that would, perhaps, remind him of the fact. An honourable friend of his (Mr. Burke) treated with infinite ridicule the assertion of the noble Lord, and had given a most ingenious commentary on "the promised war in miniature, the little, light frigate of war, the pocket volume of war, the war in duodecimo." But the noble Lord could not forget it. It happened on the event of the surrender of Saratoga. Then it was clearly apparent, that the House had been already deluded by the minister's promise of contracting the scale. They had seen how it was to be contracted. Other armies had been marched through the colonies, and other armies had been lost.

Sir George
Savile.

Sir *George Savile* spoke with great ability on the general question of the American war. He said, he had come to town against the great day when that question was to be agitated, and if he had been upon his death-bed, he should not have died in peace if he had not been carried into the House to discharge his conscience upon that occasion. He had not had an opportunity of speaking, but now he must deliver his sentiments with freedom. When he read the King's Speech, the speech which the minister put into his mouth, it struck him with horror. The Address which a young gentleman had proposed in answer to it, was, as all addresses are, a simple and mere echo to it; and the House, with that fondness for it by which they are characterized, adopted and passed it. Experience had taught him that the Address of that House was avowed to mean nothing, that it was an empty form, and generally nothing more than a mere echo to the language in the speech from the throne, which was also the speech of the minister; so that in fact the Crown and the Parliament danced a minuet together, to a tune of the minister's composing. The Crown led off one way, the Parliament in a similar step to the opposite corner; they then joined hands, and at length finished just as the dance began.—If it should please his Majesty's ministers to put into the King's mouth the first line of the song, "What charms does my Flora disclose," he would be bound the House would echo the second: "How sweet are her smiles upon Tweed!" The minister when he asked for such an address, told the House that there was nothing more than a compliment in it, but when that compliment was obtained, it lost its ærial appearance, and became substantial sincerity. This was the case now. They had agreed to the Address,
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and they must now grant a supply. That was their tone. He was astonished to hear that the House had been deluded into an opinion that they were not pledged to the continuance of the American war. It was palpable in every line of the Address, if they must take words by their common acceptation, and according to their true, genuine grammar use. But the minister had said, that we were not to go on with the American war in the same way; we were to alter and contract the mode of it; but did that make any material difference? He had read of a Lacedemonian, who, in a war with a neighbouring country, and in a sea engagement swam up to a galley, and laid hold of it with his right hand; the people in the galley cut of his right hand; he then seized hold of it with his left hand; they cut that off also, and then asked him if he would go on with his attempt. The Lacedemonian said not in the same way, and he instantly seized upon it with his teeth. This was exactly the case of his Majesty's government; they had lost both their hands in their attempts upon America, and they were yet determined, like the Lacedemonian, to go on, and fasten upon it with their teeth. But they should remember, and he warned them, that when the Lacedemonian did this, they struck off his head. He loudly and warmly reprobated ministers for their conduct. They were determined to persevere in their pursuit, determined to go on, although they confessed that they had it not in their power to make a navy equal to that of the enemy.

Lord North said it was not easy for him to recollect with Lord North precision what he had said some years before; he might have said, upon the event of the disaster at Saratoga, that the war would be in future contracted, or not be carried on to the same extent, as a matter of mere argument. But surely that expression was very different from the solemn assurance which he gave to the House on Wednesday last, that the war would not be carried on to the same extent, nor prosecuted in the same way. In the one case he might speak with licence, what had been said, as an argument; in the other he gave a clear, decisive account of the intended plan of proceedings, as far as he could do as a minister. He wished to speak with openness and precision. What he had said on Wednesday night, to the best of his remembrance, was exactly this; that gentlemen might easily perceive, from the estimates on the table, that it was not the intention of his Majesty's ministers to prosecute the war in America to the same

same extent, and in the same way that had been hitherto done; that was to say, not to attempt to send armies to march through the country, as that of Earl Cornwallis had done, nor strive by such schemes to reduce America to obedience by force. This was exactly his assertion, and he desired it might not be misunderstood. This did not extend to a relinquishment of their posts, or to a naval war; their posts might be necessary to other purposes. It only went to that sole thing of dropping all further ideas of sending troops to penetrate the country, as had been hitherto the plan. He meant to be perfectly explicit, and when he used the words "continental plan," it was not an expression of his own, but the words had been used in the debate before he rose. Gentlemen had talked of the continental plan of the war, and had rested their arguments chiefly upon calling upon ministers for a declaration, whether they designed to pursue the war on the continental plan? He therefore suited his declaration to their arguments. He did not mean to say "offensive war," that would have been a vague expression, or to have it understood farther than that Government did not intend to send an army to march through the colonies, as had been the plan of the last campaign under Lord Cornwallis; but it had been objected that the estimates were no criterion by which the House could judge of the plan of Government, since the forces apparently destined for service in one part of the empire, might be withdrawn from thence, and transported to another. But was it not a full answer to this remark, that if such forces should be so withdrawn, the service to which they were at first appropriated must be lost for want of their support, and consequently, no man in his senses could presume that any minister would be fool hardy enough, thus to render himself liable to destruction for his abuse of a power which Parliament had expressly allotted to a specific purpose, by advising the application of that power to a different service than what that high authority had plainly appointed it to. He could not help thinking that the considerations of this alone must be the most unequivocal that any rational man could desire of the integrity of administration in the expressions they had made use of.

Gen. Smith.

General Smith charged ministers with having neglected the information which they had received from the general officers who were employed; they had received intelligence early in the war, that all attempts to penetrate the country of America must be fruitless, as well as fatal to the armies which

which were sent to try the experiment. They were criminal for neglecting that information.

General *Conway* spoke with great energy and feeling. The various opinions which he had heard, and the various assertions, made him at once deject and despair. Military opinions had been given, of which he did not, could not approve. It had been said, that it would be right to keep the posts, and that a war of posts would most certainly be possible, or would be advantageous. He desired to know if it was believed to be adviseable, if possible, to keep the post of New-York. He knew that Sir Henry Clinton with all his force was alarmed. To keep New-York we must have Long Island as a post. Long Island was one hundred miles long. He owned he did not know what the noble Lord in the blue riband meant by his description of what was to be the war. Did he mean that we were to have no continental war in America?

Lord *North* said, continental war did not come up to his idea. If we fought at all upon the continent, we must have a continental war.

General *Conway* asked if we were to have no offensive continental war?

Lord *North* said, that was not the exact description neither. We were to have no internal war.

General *Conway* said, he did not know how to understand the method and the kind of the noble Lord's war. We were not to march, but we were to fight; we were not to fight to reduce America to obedience, but still we were to fight, and to continue in America. It was not to be continental, and it was to be continental; it was to be offensive, and it was not to be offensive. In short, it was to be continued, but his Majesty's ministers did not know how. They were bewildered; they had their hands cut off, but they were determined to fasten upon it, and cling to it some how or another, by the teeth, or the feet, or the best way that they could, and that with a navy pronounced by themselves to be inferior to the enemy, and what they had declared must be inferior to the enemy through the whole contest. The circumstances of our country were more distressing than he had it in his power to describe; he did not think that the ministry were treacherous; he did not think they had ruined their country from base, lucrative motives; if he thought so, he would move for their impeachment instantly; he thought they were weak, and wanted union and firmness.

This was the cause of all our miseries; this was the little, despicable Tory party, which had deserted from our glorious constitution, and the infamous band which had been bribed to betray it. In earlier times, the young men of the House would have assumed a different spirit than they exhibited at present; they would have been roused by the sufferings of the country, and would have acted with the vigour that became the young citizens of Great-Britain; but there was a scandalous indifference about them in regard to every thing but the sacred preservation of their own persons. The state of our fleet in a particular manner was dreadful. He said that once a whole people, the most enlightened in the old world, on a great emergency embarked their whole people. We ought to follow the spirit of this precedent. We cannot embark all the kingdom, but how many regiments might not be usefully employed afloat; all the regiments ought to learn the firing of great guns. This was a part of discipline very much neglected, shamefully neglected in our service. Every man ought to be an artillery man; in Jersey they were all so. They all, the whole people, understood the firing of great guns; a company of artillery was sent over to instruct them, and the company of artillery sent over to instruct them were the only persons in the island that were ignorant of the matter. This was a fact.

Mr. W. Pitt. Mr. William Pitt spoke next with his usual force and elegance. He would not have offered himself to the House at the time when the honourable General who spoke last got up, sensible of the superior abilities of that great and worthy member, had he not held in his hand a paper which he conceived would be the most conclusive answer to the language of ministers. It had been said on that day that the Address of the House was always an echo to the speech from the throne. If this was the case, surely it would be allowed that one speech of the noble Lord in the blue riband, was or ought to be the echo of another. Some words which the noble Lord had spoken on that day had struck him so forcibly that he had been induced to take them down, and he believed he had done it pretty accurately. By those words the House would be able to perceive what credit was to be given to the assertions of the noble Lord, and how safely they could vote this or any supply on his declaration respecting the further conduct of the war. In a speech spoken expressly for the purpose of appearing more than ordinarily explicit, the noble Lord had contradicted himself most strangely, and had shewn the committee in a striking manner how little

little any declaration that he made was to be depended upon. The noble Lord's words were, "that government were resolved not to prosecute the war in America any longer on a continental plan;" and scarcely were these words out of the noble Lord's mouth, when he said, "that is, by sending fresh armies to march through the colonies, in order by the operation of those marches to subdue America to obedience;" so that the noble Lord had no sooner said one thing, than shocked at having uttered any thing which seemed to be satisfactory, or which could have been understood, startled at the sound of his own words, he says another, and still fearing, that he had dropped any expression that might be fastened upon, and to which he might be bound down, labours to explain away the whole of what he has said, and tells us, he does not mean "offensive war;" for offensive war includes every species of attack, and that the word continental was used by some other speaker before he rose, and is different from his meaning, for every plan that could be contrived for pursuing the war in the colonies would be stiled a continental war. The honourable General pressed him upon the point, but it was in vain; he could not describe what sort of war we were now to institute. But there was one thing which had fallen from the noble Lord in the blue riband, and that he trusted would not be forgotten. He had told the House, that there was a clear distinction to be made between the assertions which he advanced in argument, and the solemn assurances which he gave as a minister; his assertions in argument were different from his solemn assurances. The noble Lord had owned that he did advance things in debate which, as it would not be possible or convenient for himself to maintain, it would not be politic or safe for the House to believe. This the noble Lord had said, and he trusted it would be remembered. He trusted they would never forget to call upon the noble Lord at all times for what his assertions were, whether they were assertions in argument; they might be so this day. An assertion in argument! Good God, are we to be desired to believe a declaration of this day, when we are given to understand, that the person who made it, possibly used it as an assertion in argument! What! Is saying that "ministers are determined not to send fresh armies to march through the colonies of America, by the operation of those marches to subdue America to obedience," a mere assertion in argument? and when the committee by this assertion are deluded into the vote of this day, and they afterwards

wards see the American war pursued with this army which they are now voting, and with the same system which they have been all reprobating; what will be their feelings when the same minister shall rise four years hence, as he does now, and tells you gravely, that it was all a mere assertion in argument! and these his assertions in argument are calculated only to delude the House for the day, but were never meant to be observed. But to shew what admirable union there was in his Majesty's councils, he begged leave to state to the House what had fallen from those two noble ministers who sat in that House. The noble Lord in the blue riband had said, that he wished to speak with precision, and he had said, that the war was not to be carried on in the manner which it had been, to the same extent, by penetrating through the country; and by the same plan that it was not to be carried on, with an intention of reducing America to obedience by force. The American secretary declared, that there was one thing in which he could say with confidence, that all his Majesty's ministers were agreed, and that was in not abandoning the object of the American war, nor ceasing to prosecute it. Here then was the harmony; here the union of his Majesty's ministers; one says the war is to be pursued; its object is to be pursued; the conquest of the colonies by force; no, says another, not to be pursued for the purpose of reducing the colonies to obedience by force. The noble Lord at the head of the American department, assures us, he is of opinion that this country is ruined, if the independence of America is avowed, but that he speaks it as his opinion, he does not know the opinion of other ministers! Is it to be credited, that a ministry ignorant of each other's opinion are unanimous? The absurdity is too monstrous to be received; especially when the assurance is made at a moment when ministry are more palpably disunited than ever! Mr. Pitt, observing Lord North, Lord George Germain, and Mr. Welbore Ellis whisper, said he would pause until the unanimity was a little better settled; till the sage Nestor had brought the Agamemnon and the Achilles of the American war to one mind. The honourable gentleman, with an amazing power of argument and eloquence, conducted the contrast through various passages of the speeches of the two noble Lords, drawing from each the firm, clear conclusion that they were divided, and disunited in sentiments; and that one or both of them had the meanness to continue in office, and to stand responsible for measures of which they disapproved. He loudly and vehemently called upon the House to extricate themselves

themselves from the disgrace of being subservient to the despicable views of a set of men who kept their places, and prosecuted the war from no other motive under Heaven but that of avarice. There was only one thing in which they seemed to agree, and that was in their resolution to destroy the empire which they were called upon to save, and this he feared they would accomplish before the indignation of a great suffering people should fall upon their heads, in the punishment which they deserve; and says the honourable gentleman, in a beautiful conclusion, may God only grant that that punishment be not so long delayed as to involve within it a great and innocent family, who, though they can have had no share in the guilt, may, and most likely will, be doomed to suffer the consequences.

Mr. *Martin* said, that understanding the present debate to be a continuation of that on Wednesday, and that it was generally allowed to be so, he should attempt to offer a few words to the committee, and that he was the more encouraged to this, from what had been now said, by one of the most respectable men in this country (Sir George Savile) "that in times like these, every member of the House should not only vote, but in the best manner he could, support the cause of his constituents by publicly expressing his sentiments on our melancholy situation." Mr. *Martin* then said, that as he had been one of those few, who not only had been a constant friend to the cause of liberty in America, but had frequently and openly avowed it, he now rose to declare, that he had remained stedfastly fixed in the same principles. That he flattered himself he should have credit with some, at least, when he declared, that he had not in this, or any other matter, been actuated by a factious disposition, or by any sinister motives, but by that warm attachment to the natural rights of all mankind, which, he trusted, would be his leading principle through life. That he had always opposed the war as oppressive and unjust. That it had been alledged, that it ceased to be unjust, when this country gave up the right of arbitrary taxation. That having given up that right, it seemed to be allowing, that we had exerted it illegally. That no one had been called to account for that illegal exertion, and that he thought we had no claim to peace from America, till the man, who had advised his Majesty not to receive the petition offered by Mr. Penn (which was couched in the most decent, forcible, and respectable language) should be brought to punishment. That
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he regarded that person as a traitor to his country and the rights of humanity. That in regard to the question now before the committee, for Mr. Ord to leave the chair, he should not only say, that he never expected any question, tending to the good of the public to be carried in the present situation of the country; that what he had observed of the conduct of Parliaments for some years, had perfectly confirmed him in an opinion, to which he had been long inclined; that though our political disorders might be in some degree palliated, that there could be no radical cure for our dreadful diseases, but a thorough reform in the constitution of the House of Commons. That in saying this, he begged to have it clearly understood, that no man living was more perfectly aware of the great difficulty of such a reform than himself, but that whatever the difficulty might be, that it must be not only encountered, but overcome, if we meant to enjoy that freedom, of which we now vainly and very falsely boast. That he was almost tempted to declare, that if this matter was not brought forward during the present session, he would the following year, however unequal to the task, attempt to submit it to the consideration of Parliament by some means or other, but that he hoped to see it sooner in much abler and more respectable hands. That he might venture to say of the last Parliament, and gentlemen were welcome to suppose, that he thought the same of the present; that it was, as is well expressed in an Irish pamphlet, lately published, "the mockery of Parliament, and rather an insult upon liberty than a protection to the subject;" that as matters stand at present, he believed the noble Lord in the blue riband to be more absolute than any prince in Europe; that he issued his mandates in Treasury letters, which were implicitly obeyed; that he thanked God, not being in the suite of the noble Lord, he never was honoured with one of those letters; that was he to receive such a one from any minister, however he might respect him, he would treat it with the utmost contempt; that members of Parliament should know their duty to attend, without such sort of summons, and only obey the orders of the Speaker. That much had been said of the insanity of the ministers; that he should only observe upon it, that if this country were represented as it ought to be, that we should put a sort of strait waistcoat upon them, which would effectually keep them in order; that the noble Lord and his colleague, at the head of the American department, talked much at their ease of the ef-

sects of an impeachment; that they well might do so, backed by the present majority; but that if the representative body was as pure and uninfluenced as it ought to be, that he was very sure the noble Lords would not then feel so bold; but indeed in that case, most likely the horrid evils they have brought upon us, must have been prevented. Mr. Martin said, that he begged pardon for having taken up a moment of their time but that he firmly held, that it was not only pardonable, but the duty of every man, in times like these, so far to resist his own feelings as to brave the ridicule that might fall on a want of talents, in order to express his honest opinion; that, however, some might laugh at his rashness, and others abuse his principles, that he should, at least, have the approbation of his own mind, which to one of liberal sentiments, was the best of all rewards.

Mr. *Rigby* paid many compliments to the representative Mr. *Rigby*. of the Earl of Chatham, and said, that his oratory was not less persuasive, his abilities less powerful, nor his virtues less splendid. He had observed with amazement and pleasure the effect which his eloquence had made, and the awe, the hope, and the animation which it inspired.

He said that there was one thing which he must remark in the gentlemen who attacked administration, that they were not themselves agreed with respect to America. He observed the difference in their sentiments to be glaring the other night, when one gentleman said that we must not give up the dependence of America; and another was for giving it up. But he agreed with Mr. Pitt, that there was something dark in the manner of acting of the two noble Lords; something obscure, of which the House had certainly a right to call for an explanation: there was a something in the language of the two Lords both then and on Wednesday last which seemed to indicate that they were divided in sentiment; if this was the case, why did they not speak out? the House certainly had a right to call upon them to do it. Those who had supported them had a right to demand the question, the country had a right to know it. What were we to do? To withdraw our troops if we could; to go on in the same mad and wild scheme of subduing America, by marching about the country? They must speak out.

The right honourable gentleman said, he was not ashamed to own, that he had all along voted in support of the noble Lord, and for the prosecution of the American war, with

the hope, that this country would be able, by the power of her fleets and armies, to coerce America, and reduce the colonies to obedience. He was now as fully convinced that the idea was impracticable. He had formerly declared, he would not listen to any suggestion of granting independence to America, because he thought this country ought not to admit such a degrading suggestion till we had been beaten. He was sorry to say, that unfortunate moment was now arrived, and therefore he conceived it would be as mad and as foolish to talk of the reduction of America by force of arms now, as before it would have been timid and unmanly to have acknowledged the American claim of independence. Then it might be asked, if this was his opinion why he did not vote for the motions of the honourable Baronet. The reason was this: that the adoption of these motions bound the House to the immediate and total dereliction of the American war, a measure which he did not think the House was yet ready to assume, and to which, he, as one, must object; for he did not think it either wise or proper in the House to come to that resolution. The noble Lord in the blue riband had said that he renounced the continental war in America; he believed his assertion; and he believed it as well from his own private word, as from the estimates then before the House, for as we had lost an army, and that lost army was included in the estimates, and no new army was demanded to supply the place of the former, it was clear that not having been able to conquer America with the former army, the noble Lord could not think of undertaking it when the army had suffered a diminution of seven thousand men. It was clear, therefore, that the noble Lord meant only to carry on a war of posts, and therefore he, for his part, would vote the present supply; and he voted against the resolutions of Wednesday last, because in this war of posts he would not tie up the hands of Government, so as they should not be able to avail themselves of any favourable turn of affairs, and therefore he put his negative on a motion that would have completely taken all our army from America; for under such a resolution as it had been proposed to pass, the garrisons could barely stand on the defensive; this would be absurd in two cases which he supposed, the one that New-York was besieged, and he wished that it was not probable that it would in that case be supposed, but for supposition sake, for he had no hope of the probability even of such an event, that our army could so fall out as to cut the besieging

ing army to pieces ; that certainly would be called offensive war ; but would it be reasonable to command our general not to wage it if he could ? Another supposition of his was, that if we had withdrawn our forces from New-York, (a thing by the bye, which he said, he was afraid could not be done, till we should have a better navy,) and that in the absence of our army, the French and Americans should quarrel, would it not be madness to say, that if the opportunity of cutting one or both of their armies, should offer, our general should not be at liberty to seize it ? This would be an offensive war, such as he would not condemn ; but it would not be a war carried through America, from one end to the other, which he must at present reprobate ; for, let the fault rest where it might, we were not able to do it : the estimates convinced him, that no such war was intended : and therefore he would vote for them, but he could not help repeating that ministers ought to let the House know, whether they were both of the same opinion, respecting the mode of carrying on the war.

Earl *Nugent* expressed his surprize, that any man should now hesitate to grant the independence of America ; all parties were agreed that we could no longer carry on the war ; was not this strange logic to renounce the war, and yet boggle at granting independence ? There was not a man in that House who ought to make the least difficulty on the subject ; the different powers in Europe were as much interested in keeping America dependent, as we ourselves were ; but they did not attempt to prevent the independence of that country ; the reason was obvious ; we were doing it for them ; we were fighting their battles ; and weakening both ourselves and America : this was precisely what the European states wanted, to see us humbled ; but they by no means wanted to see our colonies independent. The independence of America would be the ruin of the northern crowns, for she would then supply all Europe with those commodities for which Europe is at present obliged to resort to the north. The independence of our colonies must be to the last degree prejudicial to Spain ; for their independence would be the forerunner of the loss of her colonies, and therefore what was very remarkable, though Spain had joined France, and warred against us, she had never acknowledged the independence of North-America. The Dutch would be ruined by this independence, for, supplanted by the Americans, they would cease to be the carriers of the world.

Upon the whole, the best way to make the powers of Europe interfere, would be to renounce the war, and for some one to move for leave to bring in a bill to enable his Majesty to acknowledge the independence of the colonies.

Mr. Harri-
son.

Mr. *Harrison* said, as the resolution of this and the preceding day, would be considered and go abroad as the sanction and approbation of that House, of a continuance of that ruinous system of politics that had been so long, and for this country so fatally adopted by his Majesty's ministers, in the prosecution of the present unfortunate war in America. He thought they could not press administration too strongly, to declare, what probable advantage they had in view to this country, from a continuance of that destructive measure; for however explicit the noble Lord in the blue riband might think himself, he could only consider his explanation to be, that he would carry on the war in another mode. Under the present situation of our affairs in America, he said, no motive could be ascribed for their conduct, but resentment; a haughty resentment, that could not brook that a people whose humble petitions they had rejected with scorn, should now treat with contempt the humiliating offers of this degraded country. He strongly reprobated the idea of a House of Commons voting the blood and treasure of their constituents, to feed the resentment of any set of men, in pursuing measures that could only be the means of binding America stronger to the French, and removing any prospect of amity with this country to a greater distance. He recommended a total change of men and measures, as the only means to save this country; and where the existence of the nation was at stake, all personal consideration ought to be disregarded. He averred, the present people could not make any proposals for peace with America, with that probability of success, as if they came from persons whose sentiments were more favourable to the opinions of that country. Resentment on one side and mistrust on the other would render them ineffectual. He said, if the nation had those resources they were taught to believe, in God's name let them be brought out for better purposes, and not in pursuit of unattainable objects. Let them be brought forth to increase and strengthen the natural bulwark of the kingdom, the navy of Great-Britain, the great object of national glory and defence! For these reasons, he considered it as the extreme of bad policy to exhaust the resources of the kingdom in pursuing plans from which no possible advantage could accrue to the nation,
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and therefore should give his negative to burthening the people with the expence of so large a landed establishment, till it was likely to be applied for better purposes.

Sir *Herbert Mackworth* said, that he had supported his Majesty's ministers in the American war, from the conviction that they had the real interest of the empire at heart, and that the principle of the war was just, though the issue had been unfortunate. He heard those Ministers stigmatized from every corner of the House. If he thought that one half of what was said of them was true, he would abandon them that instant. If they were in the pay of France, they did not deserve to live, much less to be entrusted with the administration of our affairs : but he did not believe it. He could not help saying, however, that there appeared an evident difference of sentiment between ministers ; a difference which ought to be reconciled ; for without harmony it was not possible to go on.

Mr. *Fox* called upon Mr. Rigby, as he disapproved of the motions proposed by Sir James Lowther, to suggest a motion that would collect both their sentiments, and let them bring it on jointly, that the fluctuating, changing, and divided ministry might be bound down by a parliamentary declaration. He thanked the honourable gentleman for his candour and openness. It became him, as an upright and a virtuous member of that House, to declare his sentiments with freedom ; and when he saw a man thus stand up in discharge of his duty, untempted by the emoluments of office, he should have his warm, hearty applause, whether he did or did not agree with him in general. The opinion which he had given could not be considered as the effect of disappointment, or of interest ; his advantage was evidently to be derived from a contrary conduct. But he had spoken out : he loved his country, and he preferred it to his office. A learned Lord, who sat on the opposite side of the way, had, on a former day, professed to speak in a manly style. He had talked of the infamy of that Minister, who should be base and treacherous enough to continue in a responsible office where he had not power. He had talked of this, and had affected to reprobate it. He had condemned the conduct of the American war, and had thrown out a promise to the House, that a short day would come when he and ministers would speak out. If the learned Lord desired to acquire the credit which was due to openness, if he wished for any more than an affectation of independence, he must now

now come forward and realize his assurances. He had heard the honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt), with that commanding eloquence which even the effrontery of ministers could not resist, detect and expose what the learned Lord suspected, the glaring and abandoned disunion that subsisted in his Majesty's councils: having heard this, it was his duty to stand up and to call upon his two noble friends, on his right hand and his left, to explain their sentiments, and to give the House an unequivocal assurance of their being united in opinion, and united in principle. If the learned Lord did not do this, he must expect that gentlemen would think his affectation of openness more despicable than the most slavish servility could possibly be.

The Lord
Advocate.

'The *Lord Advocate* said, if there was any difference amongst ministers, it was their bound duty to declare it to the House. As to the continuance of the war, he was perfectly in the opinion he had given on Wednesday last, viz. that it was not intended to continue it to the extent it had been; and to judge with certainty of this, there was no occasion to have it from the mouth of the Minister, because the estimates fully proved it. He said, that gentlemen seemed to be extremely anxious about his character; he did not desire their care; he was able to protect his character himself; and he was convinced, if they turned their attention to themselves, and took care of their own character, they would have business enough upon their hands. He was ready now to repeat every syllable that he had said before: If any one of his Majesty's ministers was base enough to remain the conductor of measures which he condemned, that man, be he whom he might, was unfit for society. This he had said before, and he said it again. With respect to the question before the House, he must certainly vote for the army supply; it was a force absolutely necessary to the occasions of the empire, independent of the American war. If a force had been required necessary to the farther prosecution of that war, he should have objected to it as heartily as any gentleman in that House. He adverted to the language of gentlemen on a former day, with respect to the American war: one member had declared, that we ought to acknowledge the independance of America; another had said, that the Minister who should dare to propose such a measure would be guilty of high treason. The committee could not therefore be ripe for coming to any resolution on that point; for which reason, he wished they would

would confider where we stood, and rest fatisfied, that under the present situation of affairs we could not do better than change the mode of the war; and, for our doing that, he would not rest merely on the Minister's declaration. He would look up to much higher and much better authority, the authority of the estimates of the army; which clearly convinced his mind, that ministers not only meant to discontinue, but had deprived themselves of the power of continuing a continental war in America. The learned Lord said, if ministers differed in opinion on this or any other point, they were bound to state their cause of difference to the House.

Lord *Mahon* observed, that the learned Lord in his speech Ld. Mahon. had said, that he was averse from all farther attempts to reduce America to obedience by force. This, surely, was equal to the resolution which had been proposed of abandoning the war; and why therefore should the learned Lord make any scruple to adopt that resolution?

The *Lord Advocate* said, he was averse from all farther attempts to reduce America by plans of coercion, such as Lord Advocate. we had used.

Lord *John Cavendish* said, that the right honourable gentleman on the floor, and the learned Lord, should, in concert Lord John Cavendish. with the many gentlemen who agreed with them in opinion on the impropriety of farther prosecuting the American war as we had done, frame a resolution which would come up to their sentiments, and in which gentlemen on his side of the House could agree, that there might be a declaration of Parliament to bind down his Majesty's ministers.

Mr. Charteris was pleased that ministers had made the declaration of their intention of altering the mode of the war. Mr. Charteris. This, with the estimates on the table, confirming their assurance, had satisfied his mind.

Alderman Newnham concluded the debate. All descriptions Alderman Newnham. of men, he said, were anxious for a conclusion of the American war. Not only the merchants, who had suffered by it, but others, who wished government well, and even those who had profited by the bounty of administration. In the course of the debate, it had been an argument whether it should be a war of posts, and whether New-York, &c. should be kept or not. The wisest means of proceeding, and the most certain way of pleasing the people of England, would be for the ministers to abandon *their* posts, and resign their employments.

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The committee divided on the motion, "That the Speaker leave the chair, report a progress, and ask leave to sit again."—Ayes, 84 : noes, 166.

The several motions of the Secretary at War were then put, and agreed to without any division.

The House was immediately resumed, and adjourned to the 17th.

December 17.

Mr. Burke. Mr. *Burke* rose, to give notice of a motion that he intended to make after the holidays, for leave to bring in a bill, relative to the exchange of prisoners of war; and to obviate a difficulty, in the act for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, which was at once disgraceful and inconvenient to the government of this country.

He was drawn to the consideration of this matter from the particular cases of two characters, cases of a nature totally distinct and different; but which were both attended with striking circumstances of peculiar hardship. The House would naturally perceive that Mr. Laurens was one of the two cases to which he alluded. Under the law which he had mentioned, Mr. Laurens was confined in the Tower; but though it might seem to countenance his commitment, it could not authorise the hardships to which that venerable gentleman was exposed, and the rigours that he suffered in his imprisonment. It might be asked, why he had suffered a matter that had humanity for its pretext, to remain so long uninquied into, after he had declared it was his intention to bring it before the House? In answer to this, he could only observe, that there were strong reasons for his not going on with the business earlier, and that one of the most essential benefits arising from delay, (which was undoubtedly the cause of a variety of evils in opposition to those benefits,) was, that it enabled men to get at a more accurate knowledge of facts, and to tread with greater certainty on the ground they meant to take. It had, he was perfectly aware, been urged against him without doors, and perhaps the insinuation originated with some within, that he felt he had gone too far, that he found his opinion prematurely formed, and that had he attempted to proceed farther, he should have been obliged to retract his charge. It had also been said, that he was rash in proceeding on mere newspaper authority; that it was ridiculous to go upon anonymous letters published in a common newspaper, and that no wise man would, with such unsubstantial evidence, proceed a step farther in a matter of so much moment. In reply, he must say, that the newspaper publications on the subject

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were not vague, loose, and general; that they stated facts circumstantially, mentioned names of men and things directly, and gave dates of time and place with a degree of confidence rarely assumed by fallacy or fraud; that five several correspondent and well connected narrative letters had appeared upon the subject, and that the whole taken together, amounted to a printed charge, sufficiently respectable to warrant his or any other reasonable man's proceeding upon it. But the truth was, he had directly made no charge whatever respecting the case of Mr. Laurens; he had only declared his intention of moving for that worthy, enlightened, and respectable character to be brought to the bar by the Lieutenant of the tower, in order to have the House ascertained in the circumstance, whether he had been ill-treated or not. When he fell into the hands of the promising young officer who took him, (Capt. Keppel) he was treated by him with every mark of distinction, which could be suggested to him, by a memory of what his prisoner had been, and what he then was; he treated him like a man who had been at the head of the greatest common-wealth on the face of the earth; like a man who was then invested with the character of ambassador from that common-wealth; he called it the greatest common-wealth on the face of the earth, upon the principle of Zanga, who, speaking of Alonzo, said, "great let me call him; for he conquer'd me." America had beaten Great-Britain, according to the avowal of a right honourable member, (Mr. Rigby) who, zealous as he had been in the American war, had confessed that we had been beaten. But no sooner had Mr. Laurens arrived in London than he found himself treated in a very different manner; not as a prisoner, whom the chance of war had thrown into our hands; but a traitor; and as such was committed to the Tower: his treatment there was of the most rigorous nature; kept a close prisoner, he was not indulged with the comfort of seeing his relations, and his family, till that indulgence had been purchased by those relations, by submitting to the mortifications of repeated and insulting denials. The use of pen, ink, and paper was with-held from him for three months; for the people in power, to whom his request for these articles had been referred, delayed giving him any answer for three months; at the end of that period, he was so far allowed the use of pen, ink, and paper, as to be permitted to draw bills upon some persons, with whom he was fortunate enough to have had some connections before the contest begun, and who

owed him money. But prior to this last indulgence, Mr. Laurens's case had been truly deplorable. It was a vulgar opinion, and one which he himself (Mr. Burke) among many others, had always entertained, that a person confined in the Tower as a state prisoner was allowed a subsistence, or a table of some sort, by the state : but if such a thing was allowed in general, it was not Mr. Laurens's good fortune to have felt the benefit of it ; for no allowance whatever of that nature was made to him ; and what was most extraordinary, while government refused to supply him with the necessaries of life, they would not permit him to write so much as to draw a bill upon the merchant, who would have supplied him. A very extraordinary occurrence happened at the same time, which might be truly termed barbarous ; for while the venerable old man was refused the use of pen and ink, even for the purpose of procuring the necessaries of life, a bill was presented to him for fees to the amount of 99l. 10s. The means of paying such a bill were first withheld, and then the prisoner was called upon to pay it : the effect this produced upon Mr. Laurens was, to make him laugh, and treat the whole very ludicrously, saying to the man who presented the bill, " Friend, I believe I shall be obliged to quit my lodgings, for really they are too dear for me ; I cannot afford to pay so high for them." Thus it was that this good man was able, from his own greatness and fortitude of soul, to rise above those who only meant to tease and insult him.

In the early part of the war, the conduct of administration was not so rigid towards the Americans, who were brought prisoners into England, as to confine them, without ever admitting them to be exchanged or released ; Ethan Allen had been brought to England in irons ; but he was sent back without irons, and exchanged in America. This would have been the case too, perhaps, with Mr. Laurens, had not a new project been started, for narrowing the scale, upon which the king's pardon was to have been granted to those who had opposed his government ; then it was, that the idea of giving Mr. Galloway, and other refugees, American peerages, was first conceived ; and their ermines were to arise from the confiscations to be made by government ; Mr. Laurens was the first who felt the effects of this pernicious counsel ; and ministers were glad to have it in their power to ill treat a man, who was sitting on the throne of sovereignty, at the head of the Congress, when this country sent over ambassadors to that Congress ; and who bowed so low as to ask even

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for leave to see; and mix with the worthy characters of America, superior to those of Greece and Rome; for such was the language and the behaviour of one of the commissioners whom they sent.

But was the ill treatment of Mr. Laurens in the Tower consonant to sound policy? Was it prudent to sour the minds of the Americans against England by the ill usage of their great and respectable president; was it politic to make him think ill of England? Ill usage might do it, but nothing else could; for he carried his love for this country, even to doting; he had sent his children to receive their education in it, and to learn to love this country; he had long opposed the disunion of Britain and America; and if any thing set him ill with his countrymen, it was the opinion they entertained, that he was too well affected to the interests of England. Instead therefore of treating him with barbarity and indignity, ministers should have blessed heaven, that such a man had fallen into their hands; that they might avail themselves of his good will towards this country, in negotiating with America: but their souls were too narrow; the gratification of their resentment was of too great consequence to them to be postponed to the interests of the state, and they had rather insult, and treat with brutal cruelty, than soothe and conciliate by kind usage, a man of the greatest penetration, the soundest judgment, and the most liberal mind of any man perhaps upon the face of the earth: Such was the man ministers oppressed; overwhelmed with the gout, and labouring under a complication of complaints occasioned principally by the hardships of his confinement, ministers could still view him only as an object for persecution; so that the Turk, the savage Arab, the cruel Tartar, or the piratical Algerine, when compared to our ministers, might be thought humane. The great incurable and fundamental error of that act, to alter the regulations established by which, was the purpose he aimed at, was that it made no distinctions, such as wisdom and justice required; it did not point out the great and active instruments of criminality, but was confined solely to distinctions purely geographical. Thus it depended not on the enormity of each captive's suspected guilt, but on the place where he was taken, and the place to which he was conveyed, whether he should be considered as a traitor, a pirate, or a mere prisoner of war. It was to put justice on a more equal footing, to level distinctions which had their origin in oppression and barbarity, and to render the prisoners of war taken by this country certain of having the

severity of their fate softened, and made somewhat tolerable, by that tender and mild treatment which all civilized belligerent powers made the rule of their conduct during a time of hostility, that he should move for leave to bring in the bill, as its principal and most general ground of necessity.

The next point which rendered him the more anxious for the bill he intended to bring in, was, in order to correct certain abuses, which were practised by ministers in the exercise of that power, which they either of right possessed, or which they claimed, in the disposition and treatment of persons seized by virtue of the act in question, or who might become prisoners during the American war. The act, at present in being, was in this point of view confined in its principle, and productive of the worst effects. In America the prisoners were exchanged upon an equal and a liberal principle; the spirit of the law operated there in a manner just and honourable. Change, however, the situation, and the effect of the same statute instantly varied. If persons were taken at sea on the American coast, and carried into New-York, from the officers of any vessel, down to the common sailor, they were sure of receiving every possible indulgence, and every stretch of that civility and that humanity which, till the present war, had at all times been the glorious characteristic of the British nation. On the contrary, when American prisoners were brought here, they were not suffered to be free as prisoners of war on parole, but were either sent to confinement under commitments as pirates, or on a charge of high-treason. What he meant at the proper time to contend for, was, that Mr. Laurens was entitled to his freedom, on parole, as a prisoner of war; that he ought not to have been committed to the Tower or any other place of confinement, much less that he ought to have been made a close prisoner, and treated with the unexampled rigour and severity which he had all along experienced. He knew perfectly well, that it might be urged, that the secretary of state had grounded his conduct on the authority of an act of parliament, and that ministers had strictly adhered to law in all their treatment of Mr. Laurens. Was this any answer? were ministers, in whose hands the wisdom and justice of the nation were entrusted, whose duty it was to support the national character on a broad and liberal footing, to descend to become lawyers and pettifoggers? were they to act on that narrow scale which a Middlesex magistrate, a Westminster trading justice, an Old Bailey solicitor, or a bailiff's follower, would hold themselves tied down to? he was convinced great statesmen

men would feel it to be their duty to act in a very different manner. But Mr. Laurens had experienced such treatment, —he had been denied the only, and the best comforts of the human heart in the moment of distress, the sight and frequent visitation of his nearest and dearest relations; even his own son had not had access to him, but in the sight and presence of a warden. Nay more, he had been imposed on, and though denied allowance from government, had been expected and called on to pay the most exorbitant demands, under the name of fees. How different was the treatment of prisoners of state in the Bastille? there, though looked on as the horriddest jail of a despotic and arbitrary government, the provision was ridiculously grand, considering the supposed guilt of those to whom it was served up. All that justice, all that repeated requisitions founded on principles of the clearest reason could not effect, Mr. Burke said, had of a sudden been brought about by a star, that had risen, not in the East indeed, but in the West, and warned ministry of the danger of their longer persevering in their unmanly, resentful, and rigid treatment of Mr. Laurens. This was no other, than news arriving, that Mr. Laurens's son, a brave, a worthy, and a polished officer in the American service, had Lord Cornwallis in his custody, and that his treatment of his noble prisoner was directly the reverse of the treatment experienced by his father, who was then locked up in a prison, of which Lord Cornwallis was governor. The moment advice of this circumstance reached the ministers, they became as full of civility to Mr. Laurens as before they had been full of severity. But he was authorized to say, that Mr. Laurens would sooner starve, or undergo any distress the human frame was capable of supporting itself under, than be obliged to men, who had treated him so extremely ill. Mr. Laurens, he said, was naturally of a mild, meek, and humble disposition; but the injuries he had endured, had roused his feelings to resist them, and he now confessed himself to be, what he had never believed he could be, a proud man!

He now came to the third point, on which he rested his proposed bill, viz. that other part of the abuses practised by ministers, respecting the treatment which those British officers, who had the misfortune to be taken by the Americans experienced at their hands. In August last, he said, he learnt that Congress had demanded General Burgoyne as their prisoner. He had not formerly been in the habits of intimacy with the general, but of late he had conceived the highest

highest esteem both for his public and his private character; and what led him to entertain that esteem was, his having seen the General force an inquiry into his conduct in that House, in spite of every opposition from ministers, who dreaded it, and who took care to render it as ineffectual as possible; and likewise from the whole tenor of the General's conduct, which shewed him to be a man of the strictest honour and the most rigid integrity, since he had with a manly spirit abandoned and resigned all the fair professional emoluments and rewards of a long life of service, rather than submit to feed the resentment and revenge of his enemies, who wished to destroy his reputation, and render his life miserable. Some time ago, an order had been issued from the army-office, for that general to return to his army in America: it was very well known that the honourable gentleman, in the then state of his health, would look upon such an order rather as an intimation to resign his military honours, the earnings of long service, than really to set out for America, where his presence could not be of any use: his own pride soon moved him to give up what he thought was all that was desired of him; and when ministers had got what they wanted of him, he heard no more from that quarter about going to America: but he soon heard of it from another quarter; for Congress, finding that the ministers of Great-Britain would not, upon any terms release Mr. Laurens, had required General Washington to summon General Burgoyne to return to America, and save his parole. When this was urged to Sir Henry Clinton, that officer entered into a treaty for the release of General Burgoyne: but as the latter was a lieutenant-general, and there was no officer of that rank in the American army, our commander in chief could not of course exchange him for an officer of equal rank; he therefore entered upon terms for his release; and it was agreed that one thousand and forty men should be given for his ransom. This, he said, he regarded as a fair estimate; it was taking a quantity of silver for a piece of gold, and it was an honest exchange. It happened, however, that ministers had contrived to render the proposed exchange impracticable, and that by this means. There were a number of men, who surrendered on capitulation to the British arms at the Cedars early in the war. That capitulation Congress refused to ratify, and in every exchange of prisoners that had taken place since, had uniformly put the Cedar men aside, regarding them as so many Birmingham halfpence,

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and refusing to acknowledge them other than as base metal and coin of no value. The commander in chief persevered in his offer of those men in part of the one thousand and forty; and Congress persevered in refusing them; so that no release having taken place, and no release being intended probably on our side, as such men were offered, the consequence that must ensue, was that general Burgoyne must in discharge of his parole, return to captivity, if something should not be done to prevent it. This state of facts coming to his (Mr. Burke's) ears, he resolved to try what he might possibly effect by private friendship: he therefore wrote over to Dr. Franklin upon the subject, resuming in a distant manner a correspondence which had been interrupted by necessity, not choice; requesting that he would use his credit with Congress to make them desist from their requisition that general Burgoyne should return to America. The Doctor soon answered the letter, in which he observed, that "since the foolish part of mankind could not settle their disputes without wars, it was the duty of the wise part of mankind to use their endeavours to alleviate those misfortunes that attend wars." After several compliments personal to Mr. Burke, and which that gentleman in reading the letter, passed over, he acquainted him, that he had not heard of the order of Congress, for general Washington to summon general Burgoyne to return to America; but he was of opinion, that if any such order had been issued, that it was in retaliation for the British minister's refusal to release Mr. Laurens. He then informed Mr. Burke, that before he had closed his letter, he had received dispatches from Philadelphia, with a resolution of Congress of the 10th of June last, authorising him to exchange general Burgoyne for Mr. Laurens; and the Doctor saying that he had no communication with the ministers of the court of St. James's, requested that Mr. Burke would negotiate the business for the common sake of the General and Mr. Laurens.

He gladly undertook the business; waited on some of the friends of ministers; but was surprised to get for answer to his proposal, that general Burgoyne was actually exchanged, and of course no longer a prisoner. This information surprised him indeed, because it was false, and must be false; as it was not possible, that Congress having resolved that general Burgoyne should be exchanged for Mr. Laurens, should enter upon any treaty for his release, till they should first learn what had been the issue of their commission on that head

head to Dr. Franklin. It was therefore only sporting with the feelings and misfortunes of that General, to say that he was exchanged: the cruelty of ministers in first ordering him to America, and persisting in that order till they had stripped him of every military honour and reward of his services, except his rank of lieutenant-general, could be equalled only by their barbarity in leaving him now exposed to the mercy of Congress, by refusing to exchange him: for it was refusing to exchange him when such men were offered in exchange as it was well known the Congress would not take. Mr. Burke then stated the cause of the dislike ministers had to general Burgoyne to be, that he had exposed the absurdity of all their reasonings upon the number and fidelity of the friends to this country in America; for this he had been persecuted; for this he had been denied a court-martial; for this he had been denied every means of vindication, till in that House, by irrefragable testimony of the first men among the nobility of this country, and of its first military characters, he had established his reputation; and for his own part, he looked upon general Burgoyne as one of the most able, if not the most able officer in our service. He said, he hoped ministers would now take care how they should discover their disposition, if they should offer to exchange Lord Cornwallis, also a lieutenant-general, for Mr. Laurens, having refused to do it for general Burgoyne. He concluded by giving notice, that after the recess, he would move for leave to bring in a bill to regulate the future exchange of prisoners of war.

Gen. Bur-
goyne.

General *Burgoyne* rose, and was proceeding to speak, when the Speaker interfered and begged to remind him, that they were irregular in speaking without having a motion before the House. The General said he was aware of the fact, and had a motion in his hand. He said, the first thing the House would naturally expect from him, if after the various ill usage he had received they ascribed to him the possession of a human heart at all, would be to return his best and sincerest thanks to the honourable gentleman who had spoke before him. Gratitude, he said, did not come up to the true magnitude of the feelings he experienced towards him, and he revered him the more, because he knew the real source of his attachment to proceed principally from a generous concern for the unfortunate, and a disinterested feeling for the oppressed and persecuted. He considered the friendship of the honourable gentleman as the greatest blessing, as well as the

the greatest honour that had ever happened to him in life. The General now proceeded to inform the House, that he had a motion to propose to them respecting the exchange of prisoners, from which he hoped to derive a certain knowledge from what quarter it proceeded, or to what cause it was owing that he had remained the last, and the only one of all the army that surrendered at Saratoga who had not been included in the exchange of prisoners, and restored to liberty. It was an injustice he said, beyond all example, that every officer, and every man in the army, should have received the valuable privilege of freedom, yet he alone, who was commander in chief on that occasion, continued to this day a prisoner. With respect to the Cedars men, ministry were fully possessed of the resolution of Congress with regard to them. They had declared that they never would ratify that treaty, and therefore, to propose them in exchange for him, was calculated as it should seem to delay or prevent it. If Government had any reason to distinguish him from the rest, as indeed they had sufficiently done in other respects by pre-eminence in suffering, if they considered him as so far excluded by personal misconduct from the general privileges, why did they not proceed farther into the causes of this misconduct, and punish it with still greater severity. They ought either to have waited for conviction before punishment, or to have relinquished the design of punishing him. The punishment ought to have been more severe, or not at all. Since the negotiation with Congress for the exchange of the prisoners, he had never been once in the consideration of Government till very lately, and the last proposal had been protracted and neglected. It might be asked, perhaps, by some of his friends, why, in the space of many years, since 1778, he had never solicited for exchange. He had two reasons for the conduct he preserved on that occasion. The first was, as he had resigned his commission, he thought it possible, and probable, that his interference for personal liberty might prevent the exchange of some other officer of rank, who might not be equally precluded, by the adversity of his fortune, from serving his country again in the same war, and who might be more able to do it than himself. The second was, that he was determined to submit to any destiny, to the chance of being recalled to America, and to be doomed to rot and die in a dungeon, than condescend to request a favour of a set of men who had heaped such a complication of oppression upon him, who had refused him

the opportunity of justifying his character to the world by the only means in which a military man can receive a perfect justification, by a court-martial; who had poisoned his reputation by private calumny, and used him with every possible persecution, and every possible indignity. These were the reasons of his never having solicited their interposition on his account. At present, he said, he felt something for the character of his country from such unexampled proceedings, and also felt a little for the precarious fate of other commanders. A noble Lord was every day expected, whose panegyric was continually pronounced in the warmest language by gentlemen on the other side of the House, and whom he in his heart believed to deserve it all, who might very soon be reduced to a similar situation with himself. If he found it necessary for the preservation of his character, to confront the ministry, and to speak one little word of unwelcome truth, then might he, like himself, bid adieu to all hopes of patronage, but be left to bustle for his power and his own freedom as he could. The honourable gentleman concluded with reading his motion to the House, which was, "That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, that he will be graciously pleased to give directions, that there be laid before this House, copies of all correspondence between his Majesty's secretaries of state, or the secretary at war, and the commanders in chief, or commissaries, for exchange of prisoners, since the first day of January, 1778.

Lord New-
haven.

Lord *Newhaven* followed, and adverted particularly on what had fallen from Mr. Burke, respecting Mr. Laurens. He said, he had the other day conversed with the lieutenant-governor of the tower, and had inquired of him, what were the real sentiments of Mr. Laurens, as to the treatment he had received; the governor informed him, that the prisoner had professed in the strongest manner to him, that no humanity or civility could exceed that which had been exercised towards him during his confinement, and that he felt the utmost gratitude for it; this, his Lordship said, was not above three days ago. He then commented upon the circumstance of Mr. Burke's having read a letter from Doctor Franklin in that House; good God! said he, can I believe my ears! do not my senses deceive me! is it possible a member of this House, a British legislator, can undertake not only to acknowledge his correspondence with Doctor Franklin, an open and avowed rebel, but to be daring enough to read the contents of this correspondence in his seat before
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the second assembly in the kingdom. This, wonderful as it was, did not constitute the climax of the honourable gentleman's conduct; he had proceeded farther; he had actually gone with this letter to the very members of the administration, and shewed it, and avowed it. For his part, had he entered into any such correspondence, he should have supposed his inevitable fate would have been, his being taken into custody, and sent to keep company with Mr. Laurens in the Tower. He concluded with declaring, that he was satisfied there was no real cause of complaint on the score of improper treatment of Mr. Laurens, that the lieutenant-governor of the Tower had desired him to assure the House as much; that he had promised he would do so, and had now performed his promise.

Lord *George Germain* observed, that when he had said that the honourable General had been released, he thought he had been speaking on very good grounds, for in a letter from Sir Henry Clinton he had been informed, that a proper number of men had been offered for the General's release: and among others the Cedars prisoners; and that at last Congress seemed to accede to the propriety of admitting the Cedar men in the exchange, and therefore he took it for granted that by this time the General was released. The motion that had been made, he had not the least objection to. As to the affair of Mr. Laurens, he knew of no ill-treatment that he had suffered; and he had in his hand a letter, dated November, 1780, in which that gentleman returned thanks for the indulgence he experienced, for the place of his confinement, and the liberty with which he had been indulged to walk about, by which he had greatly recovered from his infirmities.

Lord *North* said, the letter read by his noble friend was a proof that the charges brought by the honourable gentleman against ministers were ill-founded; he thought the honourable member rather a little wanting in candour as well as regularity, to enter so largely into an accusation of ministers, when he was only going to give notice of a motion; and when of course, no motion being before the House, no reply could be made in defence: however, as all the honourable member had said rested upon his own assertion, he would meet him with just as good authority, another assertion, and declare, that the charge of ill treatment towards Mr. Laurens was without any foundation in truth; when the motion of which notice had been given should come on, then the House would be able to judge, which of the two assertions

had the better foundation. He was a little surprized at the honourable gentleman's comparing ministers to pettifoggers, merely for having governed their conduct by the laws of their country. He would appeal to the honourable gentleman as a friend to freedom, and as an admirer of the purest principles of the British constitution, whether the safety of the lives and property of individuals was most likely to be endangered by ministers acting at discretion, as recommended by the honourable gentleman, or by confining their conduct on every occasion within the limits prescribed by the known laws of the land ?.

As to the prisoners made at the Cedars, he hoped no British officer would ever desist from asserting a right to have credit given for them : the manner in which they were made prisoners and released was this. Captain Forrest, with a detachment of regulars and a party of Indians, had fallen upon the post of the Cedars, and carried it : some of the Indians were killed, and the others insisted that some of the prisoners should be delivered up to them to be put to death, to revenge the loss of their brethren : Captain Forrest certainly had too much humanity to comply with such a demand : but he was not able to prevent one of them from falling into the hands of the Indians, who killed him. In order to save the rest, he applied in the night to general Arnold, who then commanded the rebels in the neighbourhood, told him the situation of the prisoners, and offered to release them immediately, if the general would agree to give him credit for the number he should deliver to him ; the general agreed ; the capitulation was signed, and the prisoners delivered up : but Congress refused, without any colour of justice, to ratify the capitulation : We had an undoubted right to have the number of these men allowed to us ; and he for one would never desist from the claim, but he understood that they had admitted it.

Gen. Burgoyne.

General *Burgoyne* admitted our claim to be just ; but thought it hard that when other officers had been released, without Government's having insisted on these men being allowed for that time, that in his case, they should be offered to Congress, and that he could not find ministers as favourable to him, as they had been to other officers before him, who had other prisoners given up for them, when the Cedars prisoners had been rejected.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. *Fox* said he did not know what might be called ill-treatment by that House ; but he would pledge himself for
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the truth of all that had been advanced by his honourable friend, respecting Mr. Laurens; and he was the more ready to do so, because, from his own knowledge, he could vouch for the truth of all the facts that he had stated. With respect to the honourable General, he would say that he was sure it was not possible that he could have been exchanged; and he was sure of it, from the circumstance of the resolution of Congress, empowering Dr. Franklin to offer him in exchange for Mr. Laurens. As to the prisoners made at the Cedars, he thought we had a very good right to insist upon our claim to them; but he would say ministers had acted with shameful partiality, if they had desisted from this claim in favour of some officers; and persevered in it, when others were concerned.

Mr. *Burke*, alluding to what Lord Newhaven had said about being sent to the Tower, said, he was not rich enough to occupy apartments in the Tower; such a prison was better adapted to the rank and fortune of the noble Lord; however, if in the Tower, he (Mr. Burke) could enjoy the company of such men as Mr. Laurens and Dr. Franklin, he should not at all regret being shut up from the company of the noble Lord. Mr. Burke.

The question was now put and agreed to without any division.

Mr. *George Onslow* rose to speak of the unparliamentary language of Mr. Burke, in reviling British honour, and British laws, and avowing a correspondence with one of the greatest of our rebellious enemies. He was stopped by the Speaker, who informed him he was disorderly, there being no question before the House. Mr. George Onslow.

Mr. Ord then brought up the report of the resolution of the committee of supply on the Army-estimates. On the motion for reading it,

Sir *John Wrottesley* rose to vindicate his conduct in the debate on the motion, which occupied the attention of the House on last Wednesday; as an honourable gentleman had, since that, cast an imputation of inconsistency on him for the part he had taken in the division on that motion. He reconciled the declaration he then made of the impossibility of reducing America to obedience by a continuance of the mode heretofore observed in carrying on the war; and of the strong hypothetic expression he had used in confirmation of this opinion. "That if the administration could procure and send over fifty thousand Russians to effect this purpose, he was Sir J. Wrottesley.

was persuaded their endeavours would be in vain." He reconciled, he said, this declaration with his dividing against the motion for ceasing all attempts to coerce America to its duty, by saying, that he conceived that motion involved a declaration to withdraw all our forces from the continent, than which he could not apprehend any measure more destructive to this country; since the moment they were withdrawn, we effectually gave up the dependency of America. He therefore trusted that gentlemen would learn from this explanation, to be more candid in future, and rein the rash sallies of censure, by the authority of sound judgment.

Col. Hartley Colonel *Hartley* said, this was a moment in which the House, he hoped, would indulge him in expressing his wishes for proper œconomy respecting the expenditure of the money now going to be granted for the army supplies. He by no means approved of past conduct in this regard; and, as a necessary step to reformation, he declared his intention (if no one else took up the business) to move, on some future day, for accounts on this head, to be laid before the House.

Gen. Burgoyne.

General *Burgoyne* expressed his disapprobation of the very late and untimely season in which the extraordinaries of the army were generally laid before the House, and hoped, that in future, this evil would be remedied by the Secretary at War. He complained greatly of the distribution of preferments, and the destination of the troops; and observed, that the great and important consideration that had so properly arisen, and been discussed on Wednesday and Friday last, had prevented gentlemen from examining into the conduct of the army with that seriousness of scrutiny which so important a matter merited. If no other gentleman, less insignificant than he was, would bring on the inquiry, he pledged himself to do it, when the extraordinaries of the army were submitted to their consideration.

The Secretary at War.

The *Secretary at War* assured the House no blame in this article lay at his door; he only signed his name to these accounts, and then presented them in his official capacity; but had no responsibility on account of them, so that he could have no interest in preventing the House from investigating them fully.

General Smith.

General *Smith* spoke next to the following effect. Although the consideration of the estimates of the army now on your table, furnishes me, says the honourable General, with a proper occasion to express my opinion, which I might have conceived relative to any one of those estimates, yet, Sir, the advices which

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were yesterday received from India, call upon me more particularly to express the sentiments I entertain of the force destined for that country. I have not been much accustomed to give commendations to his Majesty's ministers, because I have seldom discovered wisdom in their councils, or energy in the execution of their resolves; but, Sir, candour obliges me to confess, that in this hour of great national calamity, where the British possessions in every quarter of the globe are actually exposed to the insults of our common enemies, I see with great satisfaction so powerful an armament now ready to sail for the protection of our Eastern dominions—an armament, Sir, superior to any force that ever was sent, in any one year, by this, or any other European nation, since the passage to India was first discovered. This effort, Sir, not only excites my approbation, but even my admiration! — It will produce the best effects in India. — I know, Sir, that the French by their emissaries at the several courts of the Eastern princes, confederated against this nation, have represented the total inability of this kingdom to reinforce our armies in India, by magnifying the very great losses we have really sustained in America, and the unequal contest in which we are engaged with France and Spain. Such an extraordinary exertion then, on the part of this nation, will have its full effect on the minds and in the councils of the Indian powers; it will convince them, that whatever errors may be committed by those who are in authority in that country, yet that this nation is determined to protect and preserve our valuable possessions in that quarter. Those possessions have proved a mine of wealth to this nation, when peace was your first object. The vanity and ambition (to ascribe no other motives) of your governors abroad, and the misconduct of directors at home, have rendered those possessions a heavy burthen; that burthen, should the present system continue, will become unsupportable; it therefore behoves the King's ministers to be very attentive to the choice of those men, who are to direct our councils, as I am convinced, that the armament, now under orders for India, is fully sufficient to all operations of war, and I think will procure peace upon very honourable terms.

Having said thus much in commendation of the King's ministers, I must now most earnestly recommend to them, not to suffer their minds to be swayed from good policy by the intelligence received of General Coote's success. His letter conveys the most pleasing advices, but the victory is by

by no means decisive; enable him to complete his success.—It is highly necessary then, that they should not relax in the smallest degree in their preparations; and I trust, that if ever it was in contemplation to divert any part of this force to another object, the reasons which I have now assigned, will have so much weight with administration, as to prevent any reduction being made in the number of troops, which by the estimates on your table, are to be voted for the service in India.

The resolutions of the committee were then read, and adopted by the House.—They are as follow:

Resolved, That a number of land forces, including four thousand one hundred and seventy-five invalids, amounting to 49,455 effective men, commission and non-commission officers included, be employed for the year 1782.

That a sum not exceeding £,242,835l. 2s. 3d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of 49,455 effective men, for guards, garrisons, and other his Majesty's land forces in Great Britain, Jersey, and Guernsey, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 43,840l. 6s. be granted to his Majesty, for the pay of the General and general staff-officers in Great Britain, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 1,315,523l. 5s. 10d. be granted to his Majesty, for maintaining his Majesty's forces and garrisons in the Plantations and Africa, including those in garrison at Minorca and Gibraltar, and for provisions for the forces in North America, Nova-Scotia, Newfoundland, Gibraltar, the West-Indies, and Africa, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 56,074l. 19s. 4½d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of five Hanoverian battalions of foot at Gibraltar and Minorca, and for provisions for the three battalions of the said troops at Gibraltar, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 367,203l. 9s. 10d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of thirteen thousand four hundred and seventy-two men, of the troops of the landgrave of Hesse Cassel in the pay of Great Britain, together with the subsidy, for the year 1782, pursuant to treaty.

That a sum, not exceeding 61,108l. 11s. 0½d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of two thousand and ninety-four men, of the troops of Hanau, in the pay of Great Britain, together with the subsidy, pursuant to

treaty

treaty with the hereditary prince of Hesse-Cassel, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 17,498l. 3s. 2½d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of a regiment of foot of Waldeck, in the pay of Great Britain, together with the subsidy, pursuant to treaty with the reigning prince of Waldeck, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 93,947l. 15s. 8d. be granted to his majesty, for defraying the charge of four thousand three hundred men, the troops of the reigning duke of Brunswick, in the pay of Great Britain, together with the subsidy for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 43,665l. 12s. 3d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of one thousand five hundred and fifty-nine men, of the troops of the Margrave of Brandebourg Anspach, in the pay of Great Britain, together with the subsidy for the year 1782, pursuant to treaty.

That a sum, not exceeding 23,818l. 11s. 11¼d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of nine hundred and thirty-three men of the troops of Anhalt Zerbst, in the pay of Great Britain; together with the subsidy, pursuant to treaty with the reigning Prince of Anhalt Zerbst, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 55,469l. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of provisions for the foreign troops serving in North America, in the pay of Great Britain, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 15,499l. 17s. 5d. be granted to his Majesty, to make good a deficiency in the sums voted for the troops of the hereditary Prince of Hesse Cassel in the pay of Great Britain, being the charge of an augmentation to the said troops, from the 6th day of April 1781, to the 24th day of December following.

That a sum, not exceeding 3,282l. 12s. 5d. be granted to his Majesty, to make good a deficiency in the sums voted for the troops of the Margrave of Brandebourg Anspach, in the pay of Great Britain, being the charge of an augmentation to the said troops, from the 2d day of March 1781, to the 24th day of December following.

That a sum, not exceeding 4,942l. 19s. be granted to his Majesty, to make good a deficiency in the sums voted for the troops of Anhalt Zerbst, in the pay of Great Britain, being the charge of an augmentation to the said troops, from the

18th day of April 1781, to the 24th day of December following.

That a sum, not exceeding 27,683l. 14s. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of Artillery for the foreign troops, in the pay of Great Britain, pursuant to treaties, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 677,497l. 15s. 10d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of the embodied militia of the several counties in South Britain, and of four regiments of fencible-men in North-Britain, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 100,594l. 17s. 1d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of the clothing for the embodied militia in South Britain, for the year 1782.

That a sum, not exceeding 21,329l. 18s. 8d. be granted to his Majesty, for defraying the charge of a regiment of light dragoons, and two regiments of foot, from the 24th day of September 1781, to the 24th day of December following.

That a sum, not exceeding 36,280l. 10s. 8d. be granted to his Majesty, on account, for the pay necessary to be advanced to one regiment of light dragoons, seven battalions and a detachment of foot, for service in East India, for the year 1782.

Adjourned to the 20th.

December 20.

As soon as the Speaker and members returned from the House of Lords, where they had gone to attend the king in the passing of several bills,

Sir Grey
Cooper.

Sir Grey Cooper rose, and moved, "That at the rising of the House this day, they should adjourn to Tuesday the 22d day of January next."

Mr. Byng.

Mr. Byng rose on this, and with evident astonishment exclaimed, "Adjourn to the 22d of January next!" Good God! Mr. Speaker, in such a moment as the present; could you, could any man in this country have suspected it possible, that a motion of adjournment for so long a time should have taken place; or indeed, that any adjournment should have been proposed at all! The situation of the country was new; it was unprecedented, and it called for extraordinary exertions of the parliament. This was a moment when the Crown ought to take the benefit of the advice of the national council. All the wisdom of the empire was required. The disaster of the other day, he meant the failure of Admiral Kempenfelt's expedition, demanded their most serious and solemn attention.

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The people called for it at their hands, and it was a duty with which they could not dispense. The fact was, that the first lord of the Admiralty had sent but twelve, or thirteen ships at the most, to attack and defeat an armament of nineteen or twenty ships of the line; was this a measure to be borne? Was it thus that the maritime affairs of this country were to be conducted, and thus that the valuable possessions of Great Britain were to be protected and saved? This important armament, designed for so important an object, was suffered to proceed to the place of its destination uninjured in any essential manner. It was very true that the British admiral, by the skill and bravery which he possessed, had been able to take some of the transports of the enemy. He acknowledged the obligation which he and every man was under to admiral Kempenfelt for what he had done; but the conduct of the Admiralty, who had suffered him to proceed to sea with a fleet so inferior and so inadequate, deserved the strictest examination and inquiry of the House. Were the Admiralty ignorant of the number of the enemy's ships? If they were, he would venture to say, that they were the only people in this country who were ignorant of the preparations that were making, of the design that was formed, of the number of the ships, and of the time of its sailing. Instead of adjourning, it became the House instantly to inquire into the conduct of the Admiralty in this case. Were they to shew themselves so fond of their own ease, and so little attentive to the interests of the people, as to quit the House and retire to inactivity and feasting?

It was well known that after a recess, there never was a full attendance before the call of the House, and at present the order for the call stood for the 31st of January; so that there would be a difference of nine days between the meeting after the recess and the call of the House; or in other words, just so many days would be lost to the public, because it was the call that procured attendance; and in the present state of our affairs, the loss of nine days might be irreparable. How, therefore, could the House think of sending gentlemen down to their constituents, while affairs remained in so very critical a situation? How could they think of the mirth or the pleasures of the season, when perhaps in the moment of their giddy gratifications their country might totter to its basis? Besides, this motion for the adjournment might prevent some business from being brought on this day, by an honourable friend of his, who intended to say something to the House;

and therefore for this and various other reasons, he hoped gentlemen would lose sight of this favourite adjournment; and dedicate some more time to public affairs.

14. North. Lord *North* apprehended, that in one respect the honourable member was under a mistake; for though the question then before the House should be carried, still it would not prevent any gentleman from bringing forward, the moment after the question should have been carried, any business that he might wish to agitate; for the question was only that the House, at its rising this day, should adjourn to the 22d of January; and therefore it did not at all interfere with any business that might be brought on before the rising of the House. With respect to the adjournment for the holidays, he would say, that many gentlemen had gone out of town with the idea, that the House was not to meet again till the 22d; and indeed, considering that gentlemen seldom returned to town before the Queen's birth-day, it would be nearly useless to make the House meet again before the period stated in the motion; no serious and important question ought to be agitated in a thin House; and yet he believed, that if any great question were to be proposed after the holidays, but before the birth-day, there would certainly be nothing like a full attendance of the members.—But with respect to adjourning to an earlier period, he could only say, that if it was the disposition of the House, it would be agreeable to him. He could have no wish, with respect to himself, for a long adjournment, since, whether the House was adjourned or not, he could not be far distant from town; but, as he had said, many gentlemen were gone into the country, under the persuasion that the House was to be adjourned to the 22d, and that the call of the House was not to be till the 31st; they had to attend the sessions, and had other occasions of absence, which would be broken in upon by the alteration proposed. It was as short a day too, he thought, as could conveniently be taken. The 22d was on Tuesday; the day before that was Monday; the day before was Sunday; the next was Saturday; and the next was the Queen's birth-day. He did not see how any other day could be taken, except Monday the 21st; and if gentlemen chose that the call of the House should be earlier than it was settled to be, they had it in their power to move to that effect; and he was sure his honourable friend who made the motion was not so wedded to the one more than to the other, but that he would readily adopt in his motion which-ever of the two days should

should be more pleasing to the House. But from custom, and the usual practice of the House, he thought the recess then moved for by no means too long; it was customary also to give a month or six weeks notice of a call of the House; at present it stood for the 31st, but if gentlemen should think proper to meet again on the 21st, the call might be fixed for the same day, or for the day after; he saw no impropriety in having the House called over on the day of its meeting, or the day after.

The *Speaker* said, that on the 22d there would be a ballot for an election committee; and that therefore it would be rather inconvenient to have the call on that day: he thought it proper at the same time to inform the House, that in consequence of the order of the House, on the 5th instant, he, on the 6th, had signed all the letters for the sheriffs, stewards of boroughs, &c. &c. acquainting them with the order for the call: to these letters he had not received answers from all the parties; he had received about 30 answers; but the persons to whom he had sent letters, were about 100 in number.

Mr. *Burke* said, he opposed the motion of adjournment, as well on the same grounds as those gone over by his honourable friend, as on account of a petition, which he held in his hand, of the utmost importance to the honour and welfare of the nation. It was a petition of Mr. Laurens to the House, which involved in the case sought by that gentleman the happiness, most probably, and dignity of this empire. And he therefore begged leave to inform the House that, as soon as the present motion should be disposed of, he would move for leave to present this petition. He said, that he had endeavoured to discharge his worthy correspondent's friendly trust, by a negotiation with Administration, which had proved ineffectual, and he was therefore at length reduced to the necessity of laying before the House the petition of Mr. Laurens, which had lain by him for some time, in hopes he should have had no occasion to use it, from a favourable issue to that negotiation; for these reasons he rose on the side of his honourable friend the objector, as he thought no adjournment ought to be agreed on before business of such vast import to the nation was first dispatched.

Mr. *Fox* spoke with great energy on the disastrous event of Admiral Kempenfelt's interview with the French fleet. It was impossible that any thing short of treachery could have occasioned a conduct so ignominious and disgraceful. If it

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was ignorance or incapacity alone, that could have induced the Earl of Sandwich to send twelve ships to fight twenty, he could only say that it was ignorance and incapacity unparalleled in the history of all times. Had any man in this kingdom been ignorant of the state and number of the French armament? He would venture to say, that if the First Lord of the Admiralty was ignorant, he was the only person who was so in this kingdom. A fortnight ago it was a matter of general notoriety, and every man who had intelligence of fleets, that is, the merchants and gentlemen whose interests are at stake in the present momentous contest, all believed and knew, that the French had it in their power, and had an intention of sending one or two and twenty ships to sea upon this expedition. He, for his own part, did not boast of his intelligence; but he had mentioned, in his place, in that House that the enemy's squadron, in Brest water, was twenty or twenty-two ships. Were the Admiralty ignorant of the fact? If they were, they were criminal for being so. If they knew the fact, as indeed they must, why did they not give Admiral Kempenfelt a greater force to meet the enemy? Would they say that they had not more ships in readiness at Portsmouth, and other places, which might have joined him, if they had received orders? They would not venture to say so. He did not mean to censure the conduct of Admiral Kempenfelt; so much the contrary, that he thought his behaviour was exceeding praise-worthy; it did him honour. But he must say that the nation incurred the disgrace of seeing a squadron of her ships fly from a pursuing enemy. It was true that he had taken a few of the transports, and some of them had come into port. It was an advantage, but he had retreated from the enemy, and he was forced to do so. This he could not forget, nor could he forget the rapture that filled every man's mind (who believed the information of the Admiralty) on Monday last, when they were given to understand, that the two fleets were in sight of each other, and that the British squadron was nearly able to cope with the enemy; that is to say; that Admiral Kempenfelt had twelve ships, and the enemy only thirteen or fourteen. It was a thing so unusual, and so new; it was also so unexpected, and so fortunate, that gentlemen were transported with joy, and began to hope that something like vigour and activity had at last crept into the cabinet; for his own part, he fairly owned that he was so perverse as to doubt the truth of the Admiralty report, and for this reason, that for a fortnight

fortnight before, as he said, every body but the First Lord of the Admiralty, knew that the enemy had at least twenty ships to send to sea if they pleased. But gentlemen were credulous. They believed it from the best of motives, because they wished it to be true. But how short lived were their raptures, and how miserably were they awakened from the dream of success! The thirteen ships were turned into twenty, and the brilliant victory into a providential escape. In every corner of the world we were taught that the enemy was superior to us in naval strength, except in Europe. In Europe we were said to have a superiority, and we were consoled and comforted by this reflection. See how Lord Sandwich proves that we are superior. By sending twelve ships to meet twenty, he proves his boasted superiority. We had heard from a noble Lord at the Board of Admiralty, that we were and must be inferior to the enemy; for when they applied all their resources to their navy, they must command a greater force than Great-Britain, who used to be the mistress of the ocean, could put to sea. This was denied by some, and disputed by others. They said, that the navy of Great-Britain had been always superior to that of France, and that it ought to be so at all times. But see, says the honourable gentleman, how the Earl of Sandwich proves the assertion. It is inferior, and it will and must be inferior, so long as that noble Lord remains the naval minister of this country. During the whole of the war, he defied the friends of the Admiralty Board to mention any one instance, or occasion, on which the First Lord of the Admiralty had shewn himself either a wise, a vigilant, a capable, or a good minister. He could never forget the assertion which he made in his place in the other House. It had been quoted, and it must be quoted so long as he should continue at the head of that Board, insulting, ruining, and disgracing his country. He was told, that the assertion had been denied, but that was immaterial. He knew that the assertion had been made, and he had a right to mention it, because the assertion had affected the proceedings of Parliament. Sayings upon subjects of the first importance, delivered by men responsible for their conduct, could not fail of making an impression on the minds of all who had once heard of them. It was impossible not to remember them, and he would maintain against all controversy, that he was perfectly warrantable in looking up to those sayings, in commenting upon them, and comparing them with the subsequent conduct of the party who made

made them, as often as occasion required. The First Lord of the Admiralty might shift his ground, he might aim at evasion, he might boldly deny at a future, what he had, perhaps, rashly asserted at a former period; but he never should escape him, or persuade him to forget, what had with so much reason fastened itself upon his mind immovably. Indeed the assertion relative to the duty of the First Lord of the Admiralty, made by the Earl of Sandwich, was almost the only assertion which had ever come from the lips of that noble Lord since he had been in office worth any gentleman's recollection. The speech, of which that assertion made a part, was a manly speech; it was the speech of an Englishman; it became the noble Lord's character, it became his official situation; he boldly declared it to be his duty to have a fleet equal to that of France and Spain. If however by the fortune of war, or by the accumulation of enemies, he failed to have, as he ought and declared he ought, a fleet equal to the enemy, what was the next thing which a wise and an active minister would do? What! but to make his inferior fleet go as far, and do as much good as possible! Inferior to France and Spain when joined, it might have been able to meet either of them apart. It ought therefore to have been his study to keep them apart. Had this been the policy of the First Lord of the Admiralty? No; on the contrary, he had never once attempted to keep the fleets of France and Spain separate from each other. They had met, joined, parted, and gone to their several harbours; the one to Brest, and the other to Cadiz, as quietly and as safely as in a moment of peace. Never until this moment had there been an attempt made to intercept and prevent their junction. Now an attempt was made, it was right, it was proper, it was suited to the exigency of our affairs, and it was a measure founded on a truly British principle. But it was new to the Earl of Sandwich; it was out of his stile of acting; it was out of his scope of management, and see how he has bungled in the execution. To prevent their junction, and to defeat the French expedition, he sent twelve ships to meet nineteen or twenty. Was it possible that we could suffer this? Was it possible that we could think of adjourning for so long a time? Perhaps we were fond of adjournment. It was said, that people were fond of that which cost them dear. If so, it was no wonder that the House of Commons should be fond of an adjournment. An adjournment had cost them thirteen provinces. It was that fatal

adjournment for six weeks, which the minister had extorted from the House in the beginning of 1778, that had ruined the country; for in that adjournment it was that the treaty between France and America had been signed. He called upon the House to do their duty. There must be an inquiry into the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty, if not an impeachment. From his soul he thought and believed, that there was something more than ignorance and incapacity at the bottom of his conduct. But there must be an inquiry. The disgraces of the British flag called upon the House to go into an inquiry. The divisions and distractions in the royal navy; their injuries and complaints, called upon the House. The banishment of so many brave and experienced officers was a call upon them. The inferiority of our fleets in every corner of the world; the loss of many of our West-India islands, and the imminent danger of the rest, called upon them to make the inquiry. The sufferings and the clamours of the people called upon them, and last of all this recent instance and proof of incapacity, or of ignorance, or of treachery, called upon them loudly to make the inquiry without the loss of a single minute; to search to the bottom of our naval management, and to apply to the Crown to remove this man from a seat which so many calamities and errors had proved him to be unfit to hold. He was willing to refer the whole of the question to the feelings of the House; nay, even to the feelings of the Treasury Bench. Was there a man upon that Bench, Lords of the Admiralty excepted, who would stand up and declare upon his honour, that he thought the Earl of Sandwich a fit and proper person to conduct the naval affairs of this country? To that test he would leave the question; and when the House knew that there was not even a minister who thought Lord Sandwich a proper man to be a minister, how could they go down to their constituents, how could they look them in the face, and how answer for their servility, or their baseness in not addressing the Throne to remove a man, who in their hearts they believed to be unfit for the office which he held?

Lord North rose and said, that so far from wishing to shelter the First Lord of the Admiralty from the desired inquiry, he knew, and he was authorised to say, that the noble Lord himself, so far from wishing to avoid it, was ready, was willing, and desired to meet it. He knew so much of the noble Lord as to believe, that he wished as much as any man in this kingdom for an inquiry into his conduct. The

honourable gentleman had attacked the noble Lord with heat and violence, and had thrown upon him many invectives which he was convinced could only be thrown upon him before the inquiry, but which neither the honourable gentleman, nor any man, would throw upon him afterwards.

Relative to the time of adjournment, it had been proposed for the 22d of January, and the call to be on the 31st. Were not an adjournment usual, and in some instances necessary, he should really move for an immediate inquiry; but as it was necessary on such a serious business for the House to be attended by as many members as might come on a solemn call, he thought it more expedient to vote for the adjournment. He, therefore, moved that the House adjourn to the 21st, instead of the 22d, which from the queen's birth-day, Sunday, and the quarter-sessions, he thought could not possibly be fixed for an earlier day. However in regard to the call it might be made on the day of meeting.

It had been frequently repeated as well as on the present question, that the adjournment of Parliament four years ago was the cause of the French alliance with America. He would be bold to say such an assertion was not true. It could not be proved in any respect that Parliament, either sitting or adjourning a fortnight or three weeks, instead of six, could have in the least assisted such a treaty.

Mr. T.
Townshend.

Mr. T. Townshend said, that they ought not to adjourn; no day was too sacred for the inquiry which was proposed, nor ought the House to think of Christmas gambols, and Christmas recess, when their country was in so perilous a state. That day, which was to every gentleman a day of festivity and pleasure, the birth-day of their amiable and virtuous queen, ought to be dedicated this year to parliamentary inquiry. Their love and their reverence of her Majesty, and of her numerous and promising family, ought to incite them to inquire how, and by whom, that family had been deprived of their birth-right. They were born to the inheritance of a great and splendid empire, which was now, or was likely soon to be reduced to a petty kingdom, perhaps to a dependent province of France. The navy of England was diminished and reduced in a manner which gave the most dreadful apprehensions to every thinking man. In every corner of the world it was inferior. He was given to understand that Sir Samuel Hood had taken almost every ship with him to the West-Indies, and that Prince William,

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the rising hopes of the British navy, was left with two ships at New-York. He declared that our situation appeared to him so dreadful, that it was his firm opinion, that in twelve months more, perhaps, and most probably in six, our fate as an empire would be decided; and yet this was the moment when gentlemen were going down to pastimes and merriment.

The noble Lord in the blue riband had said, that no gentlemen could hold their present severity against the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, after the ensuing inquiry. He wished the noble Lord would inform him whether that inquiry was requisite to acquaint us of our inferiority in every part where our fleets were wanted? Whether it was requisite to acquaint us of twelve sail of the line being sent to oppose nineteen of the enemy? Whether it was necessary to acquaint us of the defenceless state of our West-India dominions? And whether it was necessary to acquaint us that the greatest part of our empire was irretrievably lost. If these were to be unlearned from the inquiry then our language would certainly be different. But as these were well known, he could see no reason for presuming that either our opinions, or our language, would alter their tenor. As the noble Lord had so solemnly pledged himself that the inquiry would be made, he could see no propriety in deferring it for the adjournment.

Lord *Mulgrave* observed, that though the honourable Lord Mulgrave. member who had been so liberal of his charges against the First Lord of the Admiralty, confounded that nobleman's two capacities of a cabinet minister and First Lord of the Admiralty, they were, nevertheless, very distinct from each other: the one might be called a state capacity; the other official; the one of the cabinet, the other of office. Gentlemen were exceedingly fond of blending the two characters together, the official and the cabinet minister, by which means they wished artfully to throw blame upon him by attributing that to the office which was due, not to him singly, as the First Lord of the Admiralty, but to the Cabinet-council, of which he was but one member. Thus the argument of blame had been supposed to lie at the door of the First Lord of the Admiralty, in regard to the twelve sail of the line sent out under Admiral *Kempensfelt*; whereas the inquiry ought to have two branches. It ought first to ask whether Government, that is say, whether the Cabinet Council were right in sending out twelve ships to watch the motions of nineteen. And secondly, whether the Admiralty

Board had been negligent in equipping and getting ready the force ordered by Government for this service. It was then two questions; a question of state and a question of office. To the latter he would speak first, as it was that to which he was, from situation, best qualified to speak.

From the accounts that had arrived at the Admiralty Board, it appeared that it was in the month of September last, the French began to make preparations for that very expedition, on which the fleet and convoy which had been met by Admiral Kempenfelt, were sent: our fleet was at that time at sea under Admiral Darby; and did not return to port till the 6th of November. As the intentions of the French were not unknown to Government, orders were given by that Board, that every exertion should be made for getting ready a squadron, the destination of which was to intercept the expedition that was fitting out at Brest: and though the honourable member had been pleased to accuse the Board of neglect, yet so it was, that we had a squadron at sea before the French; though the latter began their preparations pretty early in September; and the ships which composed that squadron did not return to Portsmouth to refit till the 6th of November; they had been out eight months, with the intermission of not more than about sixty days. They wanted much refitting. Great exertions were made, and it was very clear that so far from being negligent, our exertions had been great; much greater indeed than those of the French, since, though they had the start of us by a whole month to prepare, we had sent a squadron to sea the 2d of December, and the French did not sail till the 6th.

As to the article of intelligence or information, in which the honourable member supposed the Admiralty to be deficient, he could only say that they had early notice of the intention of the French cabinet, to send out a reinforcement to the West Indies; and that in consequence of that notice, Admiral Kempenfelt's squadron had been fitted out: the intelligence had indeed varied with respect to numbers, but from all the accounts and variations combined, there had not been reason to suppose that more than eight ships would have been sent out from Brest for the West-Indies; if the French had altered their mind, we could not help that; and yet, he believed he might say six of the ships which admiral Kempenfelt saw in the line in the morning, had sailed the preceding day from Brest, and not at the same time with the rest of the fleet; nay, that some of the others had not come from Brest at all, but from Rochfort and other places, from

which they had joined the squadron. He would undertake to say, that there had been no official neglect whatever, and that whenever the truth came out, it would be found, that from the time that the orders of government were sent to the Admiralty-office, not a moment was lost in getting ready the ships destined for the service, to execute which admiral Kempenfelt was ordered to hoist his flag. "But why did not lord Sandwich send more ships?" And, "if he could not send more, why did he hazard those against so disproportionate an enemy?" These were the questions to be answered. He could not send more, because other objects were to be attended to. Admiral Rodney was preparing to sail; he must not be detained. If any of his ships had been detached on this service, there was no saying when they might return; they might be crippled. They might delay, if not prevent his expedition. "Then why send so small a force?" For many reasons. If any accident should have prevented the French from sending so many ships to sea as they had intended; if any accident had overtaken them; if they had been dispersed; if they had been, as they in part were, encumbered with their convoy; if they had been thrown into confusion on account of their number; if those, or if a thousand other circumstances had happened, the small squadron which was sent might have gained a decisive victory. Still there were hopes. If they should yet be encumbered with their convoy; if a storm should happen; if they should meet with a contrary wind; if there should be in the convoy a number of lazy, slow sailors, to retard their progress; if they should be dispersed; Sir George Rodney might get to the West-Indies before them; if he should have a fair wind, as he had clean ships, and was not loaded with a convoy.

Hitherto he had spoken of lord Sandwich as in his official capacity at the Admiralty-board. In his other capacity of a cabinet minister, those with whom he sat in the cabinet knew best how to defend him; this much however he would say of the cabinet in general, that such was their power, that they had the distribution of the naval force of the kingdom, and it had been known in former administrations, that orders had been sent from the cabinet to the Admiralty, to prepare a certain number of ships, without giving, at the same time, the least intimation on what expedition they were to be employed, so that in fact though the Admiralty was not without intelligence, yet very often squadrons were fitted out in consequence of information received elsewhere, and not communicated

nicated to the Admiralty : that Board therefore was chiefly official, and bound to obey the directions of his Majesty's confidential servants. As to the conduct of the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty, in his official capacity he would say this much, that a more industrious, indefatigable, zealous, and active man never sat in the same office : the noble Lord had his confidence and his friendship, because he knew how well disposed and qualified he was to support the navy of this country ; and in justice to him he must make this one observation, that though at the beginning of the American war, one of the principal arguments urged against that war was the ruin it would bring upon our navy, by the loss of the American sailors ; yet notwithstanding the loss of those sailors, we had actually, through the management and industry of lord Sandwich, a much stronger navy than we had during the last war, when we had the Americans to assist in manning our ships ; and therefore he must say, that as a friend to the noble Earl, he must be proud to see an inquiry into his conduct instituted ; when he made no doubt but it would be terminated as honourably to his noble friend, as the last inquiry that had been set on foot in another place.

He himself had been accused of despondency, when in that House he had asserted, that whenever France should turn all her attention to, and throw all her resources into her navy, she must necessarily be superior to us at sea : but he did not think there was any ground in that assertion for a charge of despondency ; in his opinion, that man only was desponding, who did not dare to look his situation in the face ; that was not his case ; for his advice was to face our enemies manfully, and to oppose a bold perseverance to their superior numbers. I now again declare, says the noble Lord, we never have been equal in point of numbers with the whole House of Bourbon ; and when we came nearest to that power, it was with the united strength of our allies ; yet even now, single and out-numbered as we are, I disclaim the language of despair ; I disclaim language that Britons never did, and I trust never will use. What we want in quantity, I am confident our brave tars will shew the world, in quality we make up, and that by a continuance of those exertions, which has rendered the British name, a name of reverence throughout the world, this country will terminate a war of necessity by a peace of glory. I have indeed heard the most dastardly and dishonourable expressions fall from gentlemen, but not on my side of the House. That a peace should in all events
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be made.—I will not comment on the purpose of such language ; but this I will say, that British spirit must be extinct, when such language is deemed patriotism. He was aware the honourable gentleman had said, “ that was not fair reasoning, we were not to compare our navy now with what it was formerly, but with the navy of the enemy with whom we were to fight.” Had this war been a war of ambition, or of choice, his lordship said he should have admitted the force of the objection, and have agreed that ministers would have been criminal, had they precipitated the nation into a war without having a navy more powerful than that of the foe they were to fight with ; but gentlemen well knew the fact was otherwise ; the present administration did not provoke the war, they were forced into it by the rebellion of the colonies, the treachery of ancient allies, and the perfidy and the restless ambition of the House of Bourbon.

Gentlemen took a pleasure, when speaking of the misfortunes of this country, to call them disgraces ; he could not see with what foundation ; for it was not disgraceful to be worsted ; and he would venture to say, that there had been in the present war, a number of bold and heroic actions, in which there was the utmost brilliancy, more indeed than in any former war, sufficient to signalize any æra, or maintain and uphold the honour of any country.

He said the present distress of the country did not amount to any thing like a conviction that a great and free people, like the people of Great-Britain, ought to follow the advice, which to his utter surprize had lately fallen from the lips of an honourable gentleman, who had formerly filled one of the first offices of state, and now held a high military employ. That honourable gentleman had said, “ if we cannot have a navy nearly equal to the House of Bourbon, in God’s name, let us submit, let us lay down our arms, let us sue for peace, and accept it almost on any conditions !” This was indeed the language of despondency ; and he could not again help repeating his astonishment that such language should come from such a gentleman ! Was it by abandoning ourselves to despair in the moment of exigency, that we could hope to extricate ourselves ? surely it was not. It was the character of a great people, and it peculiarly became the people of this country to gather ardour from adversity, and to breathe a more animated spirit of resistance, in proportion as misfortune pressed upon them.

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With regard to certain words said to have been spoken in another place by the first lord of the Admiralty, the honourable gentleman might defend the practice, as he pleased, but he must insist on it, that it was in the highest degree unparliamentary to quote in that House what could only be heard by listening at the door of another, from which the members of the House of Commons had been turned out; and where they had no right to be present.

He concluded with requesting gentlemen not to confound the responsibility of office, with the responsibility of administration. In the former case men were answerable for their actions,---in the latter for their advice.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox would not admit the noble Lord's distinction between Lord Sandwich as first lord of the Admiralty, and a member of the cabinet; nor could he look upon any other man as responsible for the management and direction of the navy, than the first lord of the Admiralty; for it would not be proper, in his opinion, to impeach the chancellor, or president of the council, for mismanagement of the naval force of the country.

Mr. Gascoyne.

Mr. Gascoyne, senior, said, that he would take up the two charges of ignorance and neglect which had been brought against the Admiralty, and give to each, he hoped, a satisfactory answer; ignorance in the present case, he presumed, meant want of information; this charge in that sense was certainly ill-founded, for the Admiralty had from the beginning acted upon very good intelligence; their first accounts made the number expected to sail from Brest eight ships of the line; posterior accounts carried them to twelve: according to the latter accounts admiral Kempenfelt had been ordered to sea with twelve ships of the line, and one of fifty guns; still later accounts encreased the number of the French to fourteen, and orders were immediately issued by the Board, for the Portland and Bellona to join the admiral without the least delay; and from the accuracy of the accounts, as they had gone on progressively, there was every reason to suppose that some of the ships had been sent out without being in the best condition, and it was certain that some of them had not been fitted out at Brest.

With respect to neglect, there certainly was not even a shadow of ground for that charge: the French, as it had been already stated by a noble Lord, had began their preparations in September; we had not began till November; for admiral Darby had been obliged to keep the sea, to cover the
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many conveyances that were going out and coming home ; and when he returned on the 6th of November, he left a squadron of ten sail of the line still at sea : what repairs all those ships wanted might be guessed at from this circumstance, that in eight entire months, they had not been full sixty-five days in port : admiral Darby's Squadron had consisted of 27 ships of the line ; and from November 6th, to the present day, they had been all repaired : by the 2d of December, twelve were able to put to sea under admiral Kempenfelt ; and ten more were completely equipped, and were now lying in Cawfand-bay, ready to sail with Sir George Rodney ; an accident had happened to the Formidable ; the Dublin, and another ship were ill, and the Bellona and Portland had been ordered to join admiral Kempenfelt. And it must be remembered, the necessity there was for the Admiralty-board to send a fleet into the North seas, for the protection of our homeward-bound fleet, and for the obstruction of the Dutch from supplying themselves, and their allies, with naval stores ; that this service was performed effectually, but not without damage to our fleet. The same measure being to be pursued, the same fleet was refitted, and put to sea, with more celerity than ever was exercised on a similar occasion, and as we had now a large fleet just arrived from those seas in the Channel, consisting of near 100 ships, and almost an equal number expected from the same parts daily with convoy, it was thought absolutely necessary to have a fleet in the Downs, as well as a light squadron at the mouth of the Texel, to watch the operations of the enemy, and to protect a fleet of such importance to the naval armament of Great-Britain ; so that perhaps there never had been made, in the memory of man, such exertions as this country had seen since the 6th of last November.

Gentlemen seemed apprehensive for the fate of our possessions in the West-Indies ; but he really believed there was very little ground for apprehension ; for admiral Kempenfelt had with so much spirit and judgment cut off a part of the convoy, and thereby weakened the force of the expedition, that he looked forward with pleasure and satisfaction ; he understood that the admiral had taken eighteen of the transports ; and exclusive of the four that had been already known to have arrived, letters from Plymouth of this day informed him of the arrival of six more ; so that in all ten had already reached our ports : one of the vessels arrived at Plymouth was a frigate and had on board all the officers of the regiment d'Aquitaine, and another had 300 soldiers, and the

others were chiefly laden with ordnance stores, artillery, and brass mortars; nor did he think that we should not be able to pick up some more of them, as admiral Kempenfelt had left the *Agamemnon* and *Prudente*, to hover about the convoy: he was not without almost a confidence, that Sir George Rodney would reach the West-Indies before Monsieur de Vaudreuil; for it was to be considered on one hand, that the latter had a very numerous convoy; that many of the vessels that compose it must be very heavy sailors; that the men of war must slacken sail to keep pace with them; and with all these difficulties it would not be an easy matter for them to get out of the bay at this season of the year; on the other hand Sir George Rodney would have no convoy to delay him; and his ships all clean and coppered; so that while one had every thing to impede him; the other had every thing that favoured his design of reaching the West-Indies very early: nay, he (Mr. Gascoyne) was not without hopes that when the part of the French fleet that was destined for Cadiz should have quitted M. Vaudreuil, and some other ships which were bound for the East-Indies should have also parted company; then Sir George Rodney coming up with the convoy with his clean ships and frigates, would be able to give a good account of them; and complete that work which admiral Kempenfelt had with so much judgment and gallantry begun.

But gentlemen might ask, why had not a greater force been sent out at first, and why even admiral Rodney himself had not been sent out at first, with the force that is now ready for him? There were many reasons that might have made either step improper: we had a very numerous fleet of near 200 sail coming from the Baltic, laden with naval stores of all kinds; to bring this fleet safe into port was of the last importance to our navy. If Sir George Rodney had gone out, and brought to, off Brest, there to wait the sailing of the French, what would all the merchants say? They would all have cried out, that it was shameful to keep Sir George loitering in Europe, when he should be made to avail himself of the opportunity that Fortune had given him of getting to the West-Indies before the enemy. If the enemy should get out from Brest, and pass Sir George in the night, which was very possible, the clamour would be then greater; for some time might pass over before he would be able to learn that circumstance; and then the enemy would have the start, and he would have loitered his time away to a very bad purpose in waiting for them.

An honourable member had asserted, that we never had been able to face the enemy with any thing like an equal force; the assertion had really surprised him; and he could count for it only by supposing that the honourable gentleman had forgotten the twenty-seventh of July. He did not mention that day in particular with any ill humour or reflection, but the fact was so. We were equal on that day. The honourable member knew what force we had under admiral Darby, when he relieved Gibraltar; and if his force was greatly inferior to that of the enemy, the honourable member might inquire, among his friends in France, why they had not thought proper to give that admiral and his fleet the meeting.

Let us then see the present situation of things as they now appear---admiral Kempensfelt with this little fleet, as it is called, by his discretion, ability, and bravery, has looked his great force of France in the face for three days together; has cut off a part of their convoy, ten of which are actually arrived in our ports, and eight more are hourly expected.

It was a very easy matter to use harsh words; the gentlemen on the other side of the House might call the Admiralty corrupt, negligent, ignorant, treacherous; while they themselves might be called the friends of Mr. Laurens and correspondents of Dr. Franklin; the one set of words would be as well supported as the other, by the assertions of individuals; and yet perhaps at bottom, there might not be the least ground for imputations conveyed by these different expressions. He understood that there was to be a meeting of the West-India merchants the next day. He could not tell the issue of this meeting, for sufficient to the day was the evil thereof; but having spoken to the first West-India merchants in London on the subject; the most reputable, the most respectable in the city, they had told him they were very well satisfied, and that from the success that admiral Kempensfelt had had in weakening the convoy, and the number of ships that Sir George Rodney was carrying out with him, that they were under no apprehension for the safety of our islands. *

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* At the meeting above mentioned, at which all the great and respectable merchants and planters were present, whether any one of them had told Mr. Gascoigne that they were not under apprehensions for the safety of their islands? they all declared that they had said no such thing, and they came to a resolution to that effect.

As to the despondency for the safety of the islands, that seemed to be wished for by some gentlemen, he could not see any cause for such apprehensions; for although he would not assume the gift of prophecy, yet circumstances and things considered as now stated, and from the abilities and gallantry of the admiral going out, he was in no fear of the French armament in the West-Indies, or their going to them. He said, that it might be expected that Sir George Rodney, with the ships under his command, clean, and coppered as they were, without extraordinary adverse winds, unburthened as Sir George was, without trade or convoy, might arrive at the West-Indies before the fleet from Brest; so that he saw no more cause for despair, than he did for reprobation in the present moment.

Ad. Keppel

Admiral *Keppel* said, he did not know, and did not care, whether the allusion to the 27th of July was made with good or bad humour; his conduct on that day had been scrutinised; and he had no cause to blush at the decision; the honourable member, he said, was perhaps a little too sanguine in his hopes, that Sir George Rodney would get out of the bay as soon as the French, for he knew very well, that a south-west wind, which would carry the enemy out of the Bay of Biscay, would lock Sir George up in Cawsand-bay. He said that admiral Kempenfelt was a favourite with the Admiralty, and undoubtedly he deserved to be so; but still they had not given him the force that was necessary: Upon the expedition from Brest to the West-Indies depended the safety of our islands; and all concerns of an inferior nature ought to give way to the most pressing concerns; as the safety of our islands ought to be the principal object of our care, so we should have detached some of our force from the East to strengthen our commander before Brest, as the service he was upon was infinitely more important than was that on which our force in the Downs was stationed; the West-Indies might have been preserved in Europe; and he had said before, and was ready to repeat it, that if a proper use had been made of the force which we actually had, the *Compte de Rochambeau* would never have been able to land in America; and consequently the surrender of Lord Cornwallis would never have taken place. He would not say there was treachery, but there was neglect, and an evident want of naval skill in that Board; he, and he believed, every man at all acquainted with the nature of a maritime war, held it to be indispensable, that where your force was inferior to that of your enemy, every thing depended on the proper direction
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of it; and it was no excuse to say, "we sent so many ships here, and so many there," enumerating a parcel of petty occasions. Lesser interests ought to sink before greater, and where the necessity pressed most, there the object should be most attended to, and the preference shewn. Admiral *Kempenfelt's* was a great enterprize; the object was more important than almost any other that had been attempted; for it was chiefly from a wise use of our force in Europe that we were to look for success. Had the French design been frustrated at the onset, Sir George Rodney might have taken his time in going to the West-Indies. It would have been better to have taken some of our ships from the East, and sent them to assist Mr. *Kempenfelt*, than that his endeavours should have failed. The noble Lord, who sat at the Admiralty-board, had asserted that there had been more instances of brilliant conduct in officers in this than in any preceding war: he would not then enter into a discussion of the assertion at large, it was enough for him to deny the fact.

The Admiral said further, that if the inquiry was fairly proceeded upon, if all the necessary papers that might be called for, were granted, and the House had full information, he would venture to say that no friend of the First Lord of the Admiralty would have reason to boast of the result.

Mr. *Burke* requested to know from the noble Lord in the blue riband, whether the necessary papers for the inquiry into the First Lord of the Admiralty's conduct would be laid before the House on that occasion? Mr. Burke,

Lord *North* answered, he did not know what would or would not be laid before the House, till he heard the motions made; as these only must regulate the conduct that ought to be then observed. Lord North,

Sir *George Savile* observed, that although the noble Lord could not be induced to give an answer to an affirmative question, perhaps he had no such objection to a negative one; and would reply to him when he requested to know whether the proceedings in this matter would not be carried on as they have been carried on heretofore. Sir G. Savile.

Lord *North* replied, that they would be carried on, he doubted not, liberally, clearly, and fully. Lord North.

Sir *William Dolben*, however arose, and declared, that he was not one of those credulous men that were supposed on all occasions to vote with Administration, be the business what it might. He said, when the examination they were now talking about should take place, for his part, he should endeavour to make it a sound one, and probe every thing to the Sir W. Dolben.

the bottom. Probably in some parts the First Lord of the Admiralty might be to blame, while in others he might deserve applause, and he assured the House he should, on such occasions, bestow the rod with the same impartiality as the wreath, as the good of the nation should be the only guide in his researches. He believed the noble Lord in the blue riband would not refuse to vote for the production of any papers necessary to the inquiry; but he would speak confidently for himself, that he would vote for all papers that could tend to enable the House to form a judgment on the conduct of the Board of Admiralty.

Mr. Martin. Mr. *Martin* having heard the London Gazette mentioned in the course of the debate, took that opportunity to complain, that when events of importance were to be communicated to the public, the Gazette made its appearance at so late an hour, that people could not get an opportunity to gratify their honest curiosity; it was kept back he understood for the benefit of the publisher; he wished that some regulation should be made, by which the printer of the Gazette should be obliged to publish his paper at an earlier hour when he has matter of consequence to relate.

Mr. Courtenay. Mr. *Courtenay* said, he owned himself one of those who thought the noble Lord [Mulgrave] had spoke in a stile of despondency on a former occasion. The noble Lord's professional knowledge, his professional gallantry, very justly gave his sentiments weight with the public: he had theretofore ventured to controvert the facts and conclusions which the noble Lord had deduced from them, to prove and account for the present inferiority of the British fleet to that of France. The noble Lord had alledged, that France, by great exertions, and applying her finances to that single point, might always have a superior navy, and that she had one in the reigns of king William and queen Anne. But from whence did that temporary superiority arise? from the disgraceful and perfidious conduct of Charles II. who had used every means to aggrandize the naval power of France; who had supplied her with artificers, who had furnished her with the best plans and models to improve her docks and to build her ships. The same impolitic and ruinous system we pursued during the ignominious reign of James II. whilst the navy of England, which had been so much reduced by the long continuance of the war with the Dutch, was shamefully neglected. In this state, king William found the British fleet on his accession to the Crown; yet to prove the natural and superior resources of
this

this country, that great monarch, in his speech to both Houses of Parliament, on the conclusion of the treaty of Ryswick, asserted that our naval force was nearly double what it was at his accession, whilst the French had not increased theirs. One strong evidence that negligence and mismanagement alone can give France a naval superiority !

The noble Lord, to support his doctrine, had reverted to the war carried on by France against the united force of England and Holland. If this historical fact was to be admitted as a proof of the necessary superiority of the French navy, it might as well be alledged, that as Holland had (in the corrupt reign of Charles II.) contended for the empire of the sea with France and England, therefore she might at present, by a vigorous effort, fit out a superior fleet to England alone. On a question of this importance, Mr. Courtenay said, there should not be left a loop to hang a doubt on, therefore, he should just mention the consequences of the war in 1747, when the navy of France was reduced to thirty three ships of the line, and that of Spain to twenty-two, whilst that of England, at the conclusion of the war, consisted of one hundred and twenty six ships of the line.

The noble Lord then, to prove his assertion, should have shewn, that France possessed greater natural naval resources than this country. But in extent of coast, in number of sailors, in a more enlarged commerce, England had avowedly the advantage. The question was then reduced to a single point; whether these unrivalled resources had been exerted to the utmost? The *onus probandi* lay with the noble Lord. If it appeared, that no more ships could possibly have been built, and that our fleet (inferior to that of France) could not possibly have been stronger; in that case, and in that case alone, Mr. Courtenay said, he would admit the force of the noble Lord's argument; but till that was proved, beyond a possibility of doubt, he would ever maintain the natural superiority of the British navy, on which the honour, the glory, and the very existence of this country depended.

The temporary superiority of the French navy in the reign of Louis XIV. arose from accidental circumstances, and from our unwise and impolitic conduct during two successive reigns. It rose an astonishing instance of the grandeur, power, and exertions of that ambitious monarch. It grew and flourished like a puny exotic, (contrary to the genius and nature of the soil) nursed in the hot-bed of peace, but withered on being exposed to the tempest of war; not like the British oak, the vigorous and hardy production of the isle, which strikes deep into the earth, and derives stability, firmness,

firmness, and contexture from the storm, that menaces it with destruction.

per dantur per card;

Ab ipso ducit spes animamque ferro.

The question was at last put upon the motion for the adjournment; which, on the suggestion of Lord North, was altered from Tuesday the 22d, to Monday the 21st of January; and it was carried without a division.

Mr. Byng. Mr. Byng then moved for discharging the calling over the House on the 31st of January, and making a new order for the calling on the 21st. This motion was carried without opposition. And Mr. Byng gave notice, that though he had never before moved for a call of the House, yet on the present occasion he wished to have it known abroad that the House would certainly be called over on the 21st, and that the call should be most seriously enforced.

Mr. Burke. Mr. Burke rose to move for leave to present a petition from Mr. Henry Laurens. This he prefaced with some pertinent replies to what had been suggested from the opposite part of the House, in respect to agreeing to an inquiry being entered into relative to his correspondence with Dr. Franklin, whenever an inquiry should be made, respecting the First Lord of the Admiralty. With great humour and pleasantry he observed, that, however his conduct might call for an inquiry, on account of his correspondence with Dr. Franklin, being deemed misprision of treason, he could not suppose it would be considered of that national consequence with what was then immediately before the House; his correspondence with Dr. Franklin, could not produce such fatal calamities as attended the misconduct of the naval department. However that might be, he promised that no papers whatever should be withheld from the inspection of the House, at any time they should think proper to demand them. He wished this might be as minutely granted by the First Lord of the Admiralty. He then read the petition, and moved for leave to bring it up. This being complied with, and the petition read by the clerk, he moved that it should lie on the table.

Lord North. Lord North rose. He said, that however Mr. Laurens had there stated the complaint of unparalleled rigour being shewn him in confinement, he believed there was no foundation for such a complaint. Indeed he might think it rigorous to be at all confined. In respect to his enlargement, it was true, an indirect application had been made to him, which he did not receive till last night. So that it was impossible to grant him that relief which his languid situation might require. There must be a proper time to consider on the means,

means, and its necessity. But as the honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) had pledged himself to prove the truth of this rigour, he should defer saying much more on that particular, until the inquiry was made. It might then be necessary to have the Warden of the Tower before that House. It would then appear whether Mr. Laurens had not informed him that he was perfectly satisfied with the treatment he had received in his custody. This was what had expressly appeared in a letter read before that House by a noble Lord (Lord George Germain) who was then withdrawn. This letter was in consequence of an application being made to inquire into Mr. Laurens's situation. For it had been suggested, that his treatment was peculiarly rigorous.

The honourable gentleman had particularly complained of the cruel and impolitic treatment of Mr. Laurens. He did not know how they were to act if the laws were not to be the standard of their actions. Before the honourable gentleman could condemn the conduct of ministry in this particular, it was necessary to prove, wherein they had acted contrary to the laws.

Mr. *Burke* rose in reply. He said, that the noble Lord was not such a child as to suppose he would enter into an inquiry how far the proceedings in the Tower were justifiable. He should not enter into the rigorous proceedings of that disgraceful prison, nor should he consider how far they were to be countenanced by law. He should only consider how far that power was extended beyond the line of prudence and humanity. In respect to his having pledged himself to the House to prove every particular complaint of Mr. Laurens's treatment, did the noble Lord imagine he meant to attempt what was in itself so impracticable? No: He could not pretend to prove every particular of rigorous proceeding within those walls. It was impossible. He therefore wished it might be understood, that all he meant was, whatever had been alledged before, or set forth in that Petition, then lying on the table, he would bring such evidence as should testify the authenticity of the whole. Nothing had been advanced respecting Mr. Laurens, either by himself or others, but what vouchers should be brought in vindication of its truth.

The noble Lord had said, that before he reprobated the conduct of ministry, in being cruel and impolitic in their treatment of Mr. Laurens, it was necessary to prove wherein they had departed from the tenor of the laws. Thus far

he must differ in opinion with the noble Lord. One part of what he had alledged, was by the presentation of that Petition brought to issue. He had been accused of representing circumstances of harsh, impolitic measures in respect to Mr. Laurens, which were absolutely false. It was said that he himself would not complain of such treatment. For he had declared to others, of his perfect satisfaction in his confinement as a prisoner. This declaration was now brought to issue. Mr. Laurens had himself complained in such a manner, as proved this assertion to be false, and what he had before asserted of his usage to be true. Therefore nothing now remained, but to prove the bad policy of using the President of the American Congress with such an uncommon severity. The noble Lord had sought refuge for his conduct in the sanctuary of the laws. But surely he knew better than to apply this to his present conduct. He was a logician, and could perceive the difference between the justifying an action necessarily lawful, and absolutely impolitic, although sanctified by that authority. A matter might be lawful, but not, therefore, expedient. There was a material distinction. He would maintain a circumstance to illustrate his position. Supposing the noble Lord had a mine which produced him an immense income, that the management of this mine depended on the sole governance of one man who might owe him ten pounds, would the noble Lord consider it policy in him to arrest this man? Lawful it certainly was. But would he prove it expedient? He certainly would not, unless he chose to suffer the destruction, perhaps the annihilation of his possession.

Lord North. Lord North rose in reply to Mr. Burke. He observed the honourable gentleman had said, that of the several points, one was already brought to issue. He begged leave to differ in opinion. All that could be said in its favour was, that Mr. Laurens had really complained of very severe and unprecedented hardships, arising from the mode and nature of his present confinement. The truth of it still remained to be proved. For from what had already appeared before that House, there was as strong a presumption to credit the lenity as the rigour of his situation. Until either of these were proved to be true or false, neither of the contraries could properly be said to be at issue.

In regard to the bad policy of confining Mr. Laurens as a prisoner of state, instead of a prisoner of war, the honourable gentleman had related a circumstance of arresting a necessary

cessary servant for ten pounds. He would aver there was no similarity in the circumstances. The necessity of the one was dispensible, the other indispenfible. Mr. Laurens was confined from the requisition of law and circumstances.

Mr. *Mansfield* said, there was no possibility of committing Mr. Laurens, but under the denomination of a state prisoner: *Mr. Mansfield.* For if we had treated him as a prisoner of war, he would long ere this have been in full enjoyment of his liberty. Would not this have been impolitic, to have placed him in the possession of that for which he is now confined. It was therefore not only lawful, but necessary, to confine him as a criminal: So that, notwithstanding what the honourable gentleman had said in regard to the necessity for the noble Lord renewing annually an act in support of Mr. Laurens' confinement, it was quite otherwise. There is no such necessity. Policy, law, and justice united in confining Mr. Laurens as a prisoner of state, and not a prisoner of war.

Mr. Burke was rising to reply, when the question was called; and the petition was ordered to lie on the table.

The following is a copy of the above petition.

*To the Right Honourable Charles Wolfran Cornwall, Speaker,
and the Honourable the House of Commons.*

The Representation and Prayer of HENRY LAURENS, a native of South Carolina, some time recognized by the British Commissioners in America, by the style and title of his Excellency HENRY LAURENS, President of Congress, now a close prisoner in the Tower of London,

Most respectfully sheweth,

That your representer for many years, at the peril of his life and fortune, evidently laboured to preserve and strengthen the ancient friendship between Great-Britain and the Colonies; and that in no instance he ever excited, on either side, the dissensions which separated them.

That the commencement of the present war was a subject of great grief to him, in as much as he foresaw and foretold, in letters now extant, the distresses which both countries experience at this day.

That in the rise and progress of the war, he extended every act of kindness in his power to persons called Loyalists and Quietists, as well as to British prisoners of war; very ample proofs of which he can produce.

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That

That he was captured on the American coast, first landed upon American ground, where he saw exchange of British and American prisoners in a course of negotiation; and that such exchange and enlargements upon parole are mutually and daily practised in America.

That he was committed to the Tower on the 6th of October, 1780, being then dangerously ill; that in the mean time he has, in many respects, particularly by being deprived (with very little exception) of the visits and consolations of his children, and other relations and friends, suffered under a degree of rigour almost, if not altogether, unexampled in modern British history.

That from long confinement, and the want of proper exercise, and other obvious causes, his bodily health is greatly impaired, and that he is now in a languishing state; and,

Therefore, your representer humbly prays your Honours will condescend to take his case into consideration; and, under proper conditions and restrictions, grant him enlargement, or such other relief, as to the wisdom and benignity of your Honours shall seem fitting.

HENRY LAURENS.

Tower of London, Dec. 1, 1781.

Adjourned to the 20th of January.

January 20, 1782.

The House met agreeable to their adjournment, and after the private business was gone through, the order for the call of the House was read, and the House called over accordingly. The defaulters were ordered to attend on the 31st.

January 21.

There not being one hundred members present to proceed to a ballot for a committee on an election-cause, the House adjourned.

January 22.

Adjourned for the same reason.

January 23.

Mr. Fox.

After the ballot Mr. Fox rose, to move for the inquiry into the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty. The honourable

honourable gentleman began with saying, that he was perfectly convinced of the difficulty of the undertaking, and also of the general impropriety of instituting an inquiry into the conduct of men intrusted with the powers and influence of Government. It was always ineligible and at times dangerous, for the men, intrusted with the powers of the Administration, had it in their power to rise superior to the impotence of inquiry, however just; and by means of the influence and the strength of office were able to crush the efforts of those who endeavoured to expose their misconduct. Gentlemen were therefore averse from the institution of inquiries, and they were seldom made, because they were seldom productive of advantage to the public. In such an inquiry the evidence was in the hands of the person accused; they had it in their power to manage it as they pleased, and without the evidence of office, it was not to be expected that any benefit could arise from inquiry.

That influence therefore, exerted in favour of a minister to be accused, ought to deter any man from accusing a person so shielded, so protected. But of all the ministers in the cabinet there was not one more formidable, perhaps not one so formidable from influence, as the Earl of Sandwich: his situation gave him the influence of a whole profession; as a cabinet minister, he of course would find himself supported by the influence of his colleagues; but Lord Sandwich had, independent of these two sources of influence, another, which though not equal to that of the Crown, was a powerful addition to it; and with it, sufficient to crush any member who should bring charges against him: this influence he derived from the East India Company.

It was easy then to foresee that he was about to undertake an arduous task indeed. But with all this he was ready and prepared to encounter in this case; at the same time that he was convinced that this was not the way which, in more virtuous and vigorous times, a subject of this sort would be taken up. He was convinced that, as a prelude to an inquiry, he ought to move for an Address to the King, to remove the Earl of Sandwich from his councils. If there was nerve, honesty, and independence in that House, that would be the mode in which they would set about this business; but the evil effects of that influence which he had mentioned were, that they had poisoned the understanding as well as the heart of that House. Gentlemen forgot what was right and necessary, and adopted, with their eyes open, what was wrong
and

and nugatory : such was the habit of that House, that it would be an idle attempt to endeavour to convince them that there was a manifest and an essential distinction between a motion of removal, and an implication of censure. Gentlemen had adopted an idea, that to move for an address to remove a minister, was to act unfairly ; that it was to condemn a servant of the public unheard, and to proceed to pass sentence without allowing him to make his own defence. Nothing could be more absurd, more false, and more foolish than this idea ; but he wondered not that it prevailed, for ministers entertained the same idea themselves. Being men of less property than official emolument ; for such now were the extravagant incomes of placemen, that their salaries and douceurs must be superior to their private estates ; they clung to their offices, and considered them as so rich and valuable that at last they blended them with inheritance, and looked upon them as sacred franchises, in the possession of which they were secured by the law of the land. The contrary of this the honourable Gentleman particularly insisted upon. In his opinion, there was no occasion to criminate a minister, in order to address the Throne for his removal from office. It was sufficient that he was incapable, or unfortunate, or disliked. Either of these cases were enough to warrant an address to the Sovereign for his removal, in which there was perhaps nothing dishonourable, and in which, there was frequently something very much to the credit of the minister removed. The Parliament had at all times an undoubted right to request that any servant of the Crown might be discontinued merely upon disliking him, it was by no means unreasonable. Had a minister a right to his place for life, to a freehold ? or was he only a servant of the public ? If he was their servant, why should the public have less power over their servants than private individuals had over their domestics whom they paid for their services ? If the public might proper not to employ their servants any longer, had they not a right to dismiss them, without incurring the charge of injustice ? Undoubtedly they possessed this right ; and never should urge that it would be unjust to exercise it, but they should necessarily deny the right itself. He would go farther, and contend that not only it would not be unjust, but that in many cases, as in the present, it would be expedient to exercise this right ; for the moment a minister ceases to enjoy the confidence of the public, that moment he ought to be removed ; nay, though he should be a meritorious servant,

vant, and an able minister; for in every government, there must be a confidence reposed in the servants of the Crown by the people; or else the business of the state can never be carried on with any degree of success: and though the people should be whimsical and capricious in their dislike of any minister, yet it never could be consonant to sound policy to keep him in office against the opinion and wishes of the people. The public had long since withdrawn their confidence from Lord Sandwich, (if he indeed ever had been honoured with it) and therefore for this reason alone, if not one of the thousand others he could urge, existed, he ought to be removed: He trusted, therefore, that he should hear no more of the injustice and hardship of removing a minister, without having first given him a fair trial. Holding it therefore as a general principle of policy, that a motion of removal was the proper step to be taken, and prudentially deeming an inquiry, as he had already declared, to be not the most fit measure to be taken with a minister while in place; such was the situation of affairs, and such the late misconduct and ill success of our naval force, that he felt himself obliged, under all the difficulties, the obvious difficulties that would attend his endeavours, to be himself the mover of an inquiry into the conduct of the Earl of Sandwich. Thus knowing and avowing what was right, he was about to do what he had declared to be wrong, at least wrong in some degree. From what the noble Lord in the blue riband had said before the recess, when gentlemen talked of the First Lord of the Admiralty, "that they could only accuse him before the inquiry, but would not charge him with the same crimes afterwards"---it would be expected, that the noble Lord should himself be the first man to bring on the inquiry. It was very true that he ought to do so. But he was not displeased that he had not done it, for if it had been taken up by that noble Lord, he should have believed that it would be conducted, as every thing was conducted which he took in hand, with fraud or imbecility; and that it would be calculated either to do nothing, or to do mischief. There was however one thing which would be naturally expected from the noble Lord, after so much boasting and gallantry; that he should give to the House the means of a full and fair investigation of the conduct of the Admiralty. If he denied the necessary intelligence; if he withheld papers; and starved the trial; the House would then say, that he, and not the persons who attacked Lord Sandwich, hazarded expressions which he could not

not prove, and was bolder in giving the challenge than in fighting the battle. It had been said of the opposition, and it was a charge of which they must clear themselves, that they brought on the inquiry, in order to preserve the Earl of Sandwich in his place; for that if the opposition had not strove to turn him out, he would have been so long before this time. This was a very curious charge. They had been said to be in league with Dr. Franklin, with the Americans, and even with the French and Spaniards. They were charged with having contributed to the independence of America;---but all this was nothing in competition with the charge which was now alledged against them; that they were in league with the arch-enemy who had robbed us of so much valuable dominion--the dominion of the ocean. Better would it be for Great Britain were they to have supported America, France, Spain, and Holland, than to have linked with the present ministry, without whose uniform aid Dr. Franklin might have been wise, General Washington brave, Maurepas, De Sartine, and Monsieur de Castres, vigilant, crafty, and politic, America firm, the House of Bourbon full of resources, of vigour and of energy, and Holland proved a powerful ally to the House of Bourbon in vain! The honourable gentleman spoke particularly to this point. It was said, not by the gentlemen with whom he had the honour to act, but by the very men, who, in case of a division, would vote in favour of the Earl of Sandwich, that there was an obstinacy somewhere, that would oppose whatever was undertaken or suggested by the gentlemen in opposition. That Lord Sandwich would have been turned out of place, had not opposition desired it; and that whatever plan was in agitation, if it were a wise one, and approved of by that side of the House, it would be instantly altered; if it was a bad one, and condemned, it would be persevered in, and executed. He could not tell whether there was such a spirit of obstinacy in existence or not; but he knew that those men, who in their hearts desired to see the Earl of Sandwich out of place, and who sincerely thought him incapable of holding it with honour, or even with safety to his country, and yet came down to the House and voted to save him, were too bad for any society, much less for the important trust which they held, of representing a free people. It proved to him the truth of that declaration which the House made on the 6th of April, 1780, that the influence of the Crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished. But he desired it to be under-

understood and believed, that though they brought on the question for an inquiry into the conduct of the first lord of the Admiralty, they had no intention of fixing him in his seat; if he should be secured by their endeavours to turn him out, they could only lament that obstinacy which they had it not in their power to subdue. They did their duty in warning their country of the consequences of his administration of our naval affairs; they spoke of his repeated errors and crimes, exposed them to view, and endeavoured to procure his discharge; and they did this in the honest and upright intention of saving the empire from the further effects of his miserable system. He begged therefore, that it might not be imputed to them, that they wished to fix them in his seat; nothing was farther from their intention, and he trusted that those gentlemen who had spoken as he had said, and who wished for the good of their country, that the Earl of Sandwich was removed from office, would now be honest enough to hold the same language within doors that they held without, and act with the same vigour that they spoke.

The honourable gentleman now proceeded to the matter of the inquiry; he said that it naturally was divided into two distinct heads; the one whether the first lord of the Admiralty had the means of procuring a navy equal to the occasions of the state; and secondly, whether he had employed the force which he really had to the necessary services with wisdom and ability. As to the first, he did not mean to introduce it into the inquiry; for though it was very true that there were many occasions, in which he could prove that the first lord of the Admiralty had neglected his duty in this respect, yet, as it would require so much detail of proof, and bring forward so many office-witnesses, witnesses all under the patronage of the noble Lord himself, he did not wish to lead the House to this part of the subject. If the inquiry was to be continued for so great a length of time as would necessarily be required for going into that part of the subject, he saw no probability of gentlemen giving it attention. There was an indifference in that House almost invincible; and therefore the only prospect that he could have of the inquiry's being regarded was, that it would not be tedious nor perplexing. If the first consideration was taken up it must be so: There would be great difficulty in ascertaining the facts, and the House would be obliged frequently to resort to opinion and speculation on which it would not be fair to ground censure or punishment. But though he did not take up this part of the question, he begged that no gentleman

would suppose that he thought the first lord of the Admiralty less criminal here than under the second head; he was convinced of the contrary. There were many egregious faults, and such as every gentleman, whether intimate with naval matters or not must fully comprehend.

The navy of this country was confessedly inadequate to our occasions. It was not the question, whether it was equal to the navy which Lord Hawke left when he went out of office, though he could prove that the fleet, at the second year of the war, was not nearly equal to that of the year 1759; but it was with the state of the French and Spanish navy that the comparison ought to be made. It was the duty of the first lord of the Admiralty to prepare a fleet able to cope with that of the enemy, whatever it might be; and when he saw equipments going on in the French and Spanish marine, it was his business, and it was his indispensable duty to take the alarm, and exert the powers of this country for our defence. Would any man venture to say that the means had been denied him? would any man venture to slander the House of Commons with the charge of parsimony? surely none would. It might safely and truly be imputed to them that they had been lavish and wasteful, in cases where expence was not wanted, or where it was improper; but no man would say of them that they had been fastidious or narrow; that they had denied useful sums, or crippled the necessary service. As the nation had felt all the hardships of extravagance, it might certainly have been expected that they should have reaped also some of the benefits. This, however, had not been the case. The Earl of Sandwich had procured lavish grants, — he had the command of the national purse, but he had failed to provide for his country a fleet equal to the necessities of the state, or equal to the strength of the enemy. He had said, however, that he did not mean to go into this branch of the question. The examinations which it would require, would be intricate; the accounts given by men in office would be unintelligible to many gentlemen, and would be rendered obscure to all, by means of the artifices of the Admiralty. He wished to confine the inquiry to that which every gentleman would be competent to discuss, and he promised the House that there would be ample matter for discussion. The branch of the question then to which he wished to call their attention was, Whether the first lord of the Admiralty had directed the force of this country, with wisdom and effect, to the necessary objects of the war. Before he proceeded to this he must clear a little ground.

ground. A doubt had been raised about the nature and extent of responsibility: knowing, and believing, that all his Majesty's ministers were guilty of the dismemberment of the empire, and of the calamities with which we were surrounded: it was to him a matter of indifference on whom the consequences of the inquiry should light; whether it should be the first lord of the Admiralty, or the first lord of the Treasury, or on either or all of the Secretaries of State. He thought them all guilty, and punishment could not fail to be just, if it fell on either; but he must pay regard to the constitution. Our constitution then pointed out the particular minister who was bound to give advice to his Sovereign in naval concerns, and who was consequently responsible for naval measures. That minister was the first lord of the Admiralty. A subaltern commissioner of that Board, and which he once had the honour himself to be, would be bound, if he should receive an order from a secretary of state, to send a number of ships, with a particular commander, on any given expedition, to execute that order strictly and literally, without presuming to examine the propriety or the wisdom of the measure. He could not argue on the point, because he had not the means of judging. He knew not the grounds on which the order was made. He knew not the intelligence, and he ought not to know it, nor the facts, nor the arguments, nor the reasoning on which it had been adopted by the cabinet. It was therefore his immediate duty to obey the mandate; but if the order had been sent by the same secretary of state to the first lord of the Admiralty, the case was very different. He, as well as the secretary, was a counsellor of the King, and he knew, or ought to know all the grounds on which the order was made. If, therefore, knowing these grounds, he disapproved of the measure; if he considered it as inconvenient or dangerous, it was his duty, and he was bound to disobey it. It was a power necessary to his office, to exercise his discretion in every measure which he executed, since without discretion there could be no responsibility. This was the true constitutional doctrine, and it was this which would give firmness and stability to our government, if left unshackled by influence. But it was no wonder, that a noble Lord (Lord Mulgrave) should, by the circumstances of his situation, his friendship, his familiarity, and other reasons, be apt to confound the minister with the subaltern, and speak with some confusion on the subject of responsibility, since he might, though only an inferior lord of that Board,

fancy himself, in the House of Commons, the prime minister of the Admiralty.

The honourable gentleman now entered into an enumeration of the instances of mismanagement of our navy, which had occurred in the course of the last five years, by which the House would see what were the particular points to which he meant to call their attention in the proposed enquiry. This he did with that historical precision and accuracy for which he is remarked, beginning with the commencement of hostilities between this country and France, and tracing the naval minister through all the series of his measures year by year. We cannot presume to follow him with correctness. He said, that as early as the year 1771 his Majesty's ministers must have supposed that France would interfere in our contest with America. He took this for granted, because at so early a date they applied to his honourable friend, Admiral Keppel, to know whether he would take upon him an important naval command. From this application he collected the circumstance of their apprehension of a French war, because knowing the sentiments of that great admiral on the subject of the American question, they could not presume to offer him an appointment to fight against the Americans. He did not mean by saying, that because admiral Keppel would not fight against the Americans, those officers were guilty who had accepted of commands against them. God forbid! Many gallant gentlemen had been employed in that service from mistaken principles of discipline, and some from an early conviction of the rectitude of our cause. He only meant to say, that admiral Keppel, with his sentiments on that question, would have been unpardonable if he had accepted of a command. The ministry then knew so early as 1776, that the French would interfere, and from that moment at least, if not before, they ought to have begun their equipments to act with decision against France in the beginning of the war. At that time a very worthy and industrious friend of his, Mr. T. Luttrell, knowing that the first thing a statesman had to do, before he embarks in a war, is to examine whether his means are sufficient for carrying it on, moved in his place, that the navy of England in its then state, was inadequate to the exigencies of the empire. This motion, Mr. Fox said, he had the honour to second; but, though obviously founded in truth, it was rejected by a majority: ministers then boasted of the formidable and still growing state of the navy, and parlia-
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ment and the nation at large were given to understand, that we actually had, at that time, a naval force equal to every possible exigency of the state. At the same time the House was told from the Treasury Bench, that if it were not the case, it would be impolitic and dangerous to publish it to the world. What truth there was in such assertions experience soon pointed out, and the public found that the assertions of ministers, and the flattering picture drawn by them of the navy of England, were illusive. For so far had a noble lord in office gone (Mulgrave), that in the present session of Parliament he had asserted not only that we were inferior to the French at sea; but that it was in the nature of things absolutely impossible that we should be equal to her, whenever she should turn her thoughts entirely to her marine; here the illusion ended; and here we were undeceived by ministers; the motion he alluded to, had this tendency, to make ministers reflect before hand, and consider the strength of France and England, before we should break with the French; and after they should have, by mature deliberation, discovered what must be their own inferiority in a contest with America, and France united, to persuade them to make peace with America, and, by so doing, either prevent the war with France, or be enabled to bring our whole force against her, and crush her navy at a blow. If this had been done, that country, used to be stiled the British empire in America, might be perhaps independant, but it would not have been French.

But the circumstance to which he wished to allude in this matter was the bold contrast which there was in the language of gentlemen on the opposite side of the House. In 1776, before we went to war, it was declared to be impolitic and dangerous to say that our navy was inferior to that of the enemy, even if it should really be so, we must not venture to speak the truth. But in 1781, a member of the Board of Admiralty declares in the face of the whole world, during the fourth year of a war with France and Spain, that our navy was not only inferior, but that it must necessarily be inferior to that of the enemy, at all times when the enemy pleased. The gentlemen in opposition were blamed for giving improper intelligence to the enemy in the year 1776.—The noble Lord of the Admiralty was no doubt praised for giving them intelligence in the year 1781. It was dangerous before we went to war to tell the French and Spaniards what we thought of our force—It was perfectly safe to in-

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form them of it when we were involved with them, and surrounded in a manner unprecedented in English history. The noble Lord talked of the despondency of not looking our misfortunes in the face: but mark the difference of the noble Lord's conduct and his words;—We must not look our misfortunes in the face, nor examine our situation with steady, resolute minds, when examination would be advantageous because seasonable; when by examination we might have prevented the calamities that ensued; but we must examine and publish our weakness to all the world, nay, we must go out of the way, and without being called or solicited, inform our enemies at the very moment when they are ready to attack us in every quarter of the world, that we are inferior to them, and must be so. It seemed all the way through the present administration, that the ministers, as if they had been really the servants of France, thought only of the best means of involving us in wars, but took no pains to bring us out of them again. They kept their weakness concealed till it was too late for the people to know it, and then they were the first themselves to reveal it.

But they knew so early as 1776 of the approaching American war, and that we should have occasion to prepare for the rupture with all the industry, skill, and zeal which we could exert. How did they do this? They sent all the frigates of England to the American seas, for the great national purpose of destroying the American trade. This was an object so much at heart, that they not only sent all their frigates to America, leaving the European seas totally unprovided with small ships, but they also employed the line of battle ships during the whole of the winter of 1778 in cruising, for the purpose of making captures of American traders; even in the very moment when the treaty was signing between France and America, were the large ships of Britain tossing about in the seas, encountering all the dangers and injuries of winter storms, for the sake of pillaging American craft. What was the consequence? they were torn to pieces; and in the beginning of the campaign, when Admiral Keppel went down to take upon him the command of the grand fleet, he found but six ships ready for sea, although it was a well known notorious fact, that the Earl of Sandwich had, in his place in the House of Peers, declared some weeks before, that there were between thirty and forty line of battle ships ready for sea. This plan of cruising in the winter, had been the favourite measure of his Majesty's ministers, and
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and had contributed more than any thing else to the lateness of all our expeditions, by which we had always been behind hand with the enemy; for the consequence was, that from the damages which they sustained, and which were almost inseparable from a Channel cruize, they were sent into dock to be repaired, at a time when it became known that the French were arming as fast as possible: had these ships been in readiness, which they might have been, if they had not been employed in a service that ought properly to have been performed by frigates; we might have insisted that the French should have immediately disarmed, or we might have fallen upon them before they were prepared; and so have crushed them before they would have been able to strike a blow.

This was the cause of that shameful deficiency which Admiral Keppel found when he went down in March, 1778, and found only six ships of the line fit for sea. Thus to use an expression to which he supposed the Admiralty would not object, "a glorious opportunity was lost" of striking an effectual blow at the French navy, and crushing them by a decisive stroke in the infancy of the war. For had Admiral Keppel been sent to sea with his squadron at an early period of the campaign, what might not have been the consequence? instead of this, he was detained as if this faithful servant of the King of France, the First Lord of the Admiralty, was waiting till the French were ready to meet us. Then, and not till then, he sent Admiral Keppel to sea with twenty ships to fight twenty-seven, an odds so formidable, as in fact to endanger the very existence of the empire. When he failed with twenty ships, he was given to understand that his force was superior to any that the enemy had to bring against him; and he believed them; but what was his disappointment, what must have been his indignation, at finding that the enemy, contrary to his expectations, had twenty-seven sail of the line at sea? here they imposed on their commander; but it was their vanity in having a fleet in the Channel, that made them impose upon him: had they been as diligent as they were vain of this parade, they might have had a sufficient force under Admiral Keppel, to have destroyed the French navy at a blow; and thus have prevented all the disgraces and disasters that have since befallen us.

The intelligence of the equipment of a squadron at Toulon had reached this country some months before that squadron was ready to sail; it was known here that some persons of distinction

distinction were to embark in it as passengers : this and a variety of other circumstances pointed out beyond a doubt, that America was the quarter to which this armament was destined : and yet though all England knew this ; though the preparations were public during the months of January, February, March and April, yet not a syllable of this had been sent to Lord Howe in America till the middle of June, at least the dispatches were dated the 6th of May. Nay, so far had the ministers been from giving Lord Howe notice of his danger, before the date of these dispatches, that they had even sent him orders to detach a part of his force to the West-Indies. He was just preparing to execute this order, when he heard, but not from ministry, of the expected arrival of Count D'Estaing in those seas. He then with that manly foresight, which distinguishes an able commander, kept his force together, and by a singular effort of genius and naval skill, preserved his fleet and the army by an arrangement which will place his name among the most celebrated of our British admirals. Such were the dispositions made by his Lordship, such the spirit and abilities displayed by him against Count D'Estaing, that he defeated that officer with a very inferior force ; or if he did not literally gain a victory over him, at least he gained the substance of one : fortunately indeed, for his own honour, but unfortunately perhaps for this country ; for if the army that was saved by this victory had been captured, we should not at this day have such a load of debt upon our shoulders and have lost so many armies, for our ministers would have been obliged to make peace with America. By the winter's cruize of our two-deck ships in the Channel, and the subsequent repairs, Admiral Byron was prevented from sailing time enough to dispute the passage of the Mediterranean with Count D'Estaing ; and the same cause continuing to operate, together with the absurdity of our ministers, we were not able afterwards to prevent the sailing of Monsieur de Grasse, and Mr. de la Motte Piquet, with reinforcements to Count D'Estaing ; the consequence was, that Admiral Byron had the mortification to arrive time enough to see Grenada taken, our most valuable settlement in the West-Indies after Jamaica. As dilatory in instructing and strengthening the hands of their officers abroad, as they were in fitting out ships at home, the ministers had ordered Admiral Barrington to wait at Barbadoes till he should be reinforced ; he too, from superior information, ventured to disobey these orders, and saved St. Lucia ;

Lucia; but so slow were ministers in sending out reinforcements, that had Commodore Hotham arrived only one day later than he did, St. Lucia would have been lost: he defended it, indeed, in a manner which would do him and his country honour, while bravery and abilities should be esteemed in the world: he defended the island with a force more than three times less than that of the enemy; and yet, exclaimed Mr. Fox, Admiral Barrington is now on shore. He said he must speak a little on that circumstance. The admiral was said to have come on shore because he would not accept of the principal command of the fleet.

When he had spoken in debate of the number of brave officers who were driven by the Earl of Sandwich from the service, and it had been a subject of conversation, Lord Howe desired that no gentleman would give reasons for his conduct. This had been erroneously supposed to apply to what had fallen from him. In fact, it came from the noble Lord on account of the reason which Lord Lisburne gave for Admiral Barrington's retiring; it was, his Lordship said, because he had weak nerves. This gave a pretty good idea of the reason of so many brave men withdrawing themselves from the service. Had Admiral Barrington weak nerves? He had not weak nerves, when, with five ships of the line, he stood and beat off fifteen of the enemy. But he whose nerves were not weak when he met a host of foes, shrunk from a closet interview, and a responsible connection with Lord Sandwich. Admiral Barrington was a man, from whose connections it might be expected that he would not be unfriendly to ministry, but yet he had apprehensions of the Earl of Sandwich. This was the cause of so many brave men retiring. This was the cause of their choosing to withdraw themselves from a post where they had greater enemies to meet than the French and Spaniards. They shewed us that there was a man at the head of our naval affairs, whose quality and cunning it was to make even bravery useless to his country.

The year 1779 presented us with a repetition of the plan and misconduct of 1778. Late cruising in the winter prevented early equipments in the campaign. The Spanish war broke out, and the First Lord of the Admiralty, as if he wished only to fight the battles of our enemies, never once attempted to prevent the French and Spaniards from meeting, joining, and insulting us in the Channel. Sir Charles Hardy was sent to sea without instructions to prevent the junction of the enemy, and it was only Providence, our

good and great ally, that saved us, by sending an eastern wind, and a distemper, to drive the enemy from our doors. Sir Charles Hardy stole along the French coast in order to avoid seeing the enemy, but when he got into Torbay, and the Earl of Sandwich was perfectly assured that the enemy was safe in Brest water, he commenced his exertions, and all was hurry and confusion at the dock-yards, that hurry which he constantly mistakes for diligence; and when the clamour ran high, and the people felt the indignity that had been offered to them, he promised them that they should have a good account of the enemy. The next piece of misconduct was in the manner of dispatching Admiral Rodney to the West-Indies. A French squadron under Count de Guichen, had sailed for that destination, and very alarming appearances ensued: It was exceedingly necessary that Sir George should be there as soon as possible. In order therefore to facilitate his passage, he is sent to relieve Gibraltar, by which he is detained a considerable time, and the enemy are left in the quiet enjoyment of this opportunity of reinforcing the squadron at Martinique. We had it in our power to have got the start of De Guichen, for the fleet which was dispatched straight, arrived in the West-Indies before the French squadron. We might therefore have intercepted their passage and fought them separated. It was true that Sir George Rodney's squadron destroyed nine of the enemy's ships, a capital advantage, and indeed the only thing that had the consequences of a victory through the whole war; but were ministers to be praised for what they did not contrive, and what they did not foresee? It was Providence again, and the bravery of Sir George Rodney's fleet, but not the Earl of Sandwich that gave us that advantage. In the West-Indies the French and Spaniards formed a junction, and Sir George Rodney, who is fond of promising to give a good account, and not very apt to be depressed by the misfortunes of his country, fairly owned that he durst not meet them. Here then ruin stared us in the face, every one of our islands lay at the mercy of our enemy; but there seemed, says the honourable gentleman, to be a Lord Sandwich in their councils, and God grant that there may always be a Lord Sandwich in their councils! They met, and separated without doing any thing.

The year 1780 was remarkable for the capture of an immense fleet of merchantmen and transports under commodore Moutray, and the circumstances of the case were striking: they

gave another suspicion among all the other parts of Lord Sandwich's conduct, that he was intent on doing good and faithful service to his masters of the House of Bourbon. At least if they had been his masters, it could not have been more consistent with duty to have ordered captain Moutray to deliver up his invaluable convoy to the jaws of the enemy, than to do as he had done; for at the very moment when he knew that the Spanish fleet was cruising off the coast of Spain he ordered captain Moutray to rendezvous at Madeira; that is to say, to go in the very track where he would fall in with the enemy. In this year again the same fault was observable with respect to late sailing. No attempt was made either to prevent the fleets from joining, or to prevent the sailing of Mons. Ternay for America with that military force which had lately captured the army of Earl Cornwallis. The same scheme of bombastic gasconade still prevailed, and ships and fleets were employed in needless cruizes, merely for the purposes of saying, that we were in possession of the seas when the enemy were in port. It was in this year that Commodore Fielding was sent with six ships of the line to intercept Admiral Byland with one. This circumstance made the assertion of Lord North, "that the Dutch war was a war of necessity, and not of choice, as we suffered more from them while they were insidious friends than since they are become open enemies," intelligible; it was to him inexplicable till of late, but now he saw its meaning and acknowledged the truth of the observation; for when they were friends, we sent six ships to fight one; but when they became enemies, we sent only five ships to fight eight. This was the plan of Lord Sandwich. As soon as a nation became our enemy, he lowered the opposition that we made to it, and thus it plainly appeared, that they were more injurious to us when friends than now when enemies, for they then detached more of our men of war than now from the contest with the House of Bourbon.

The honourable gentleman then came to the year 1781, the memorable period of our disgraces and infamy; and he particularly described the naval transactions. The rupture with Spain was the first memorable event of this period; a measure so scandalously impolitic, and so infamously brought about, that ministers ought to be impeached for that alone. Though ministers seemed in the Dutch war to be actuated by a spirit of resentment, they did not know how to wreak it on the Dutch: if they had had a mind to crush them, but

God forbid said he, that the Dutch should ever be crushed, for then indeed the present system of Europe would be no more; but if they wished to crush Holland, they should have had a fleet in the Texel to awe the Dutch, and force them to yield to the terms of England; no such measure was adopted: instead of that five ships only were sent into the North seas. Providence, indeed, but no thanks to the Admiralty, had sent the Berwick to join Admiral Parker.—But why the Sampson was not sent by their Lordships no one could tell. It was true, indeed, that they sent to the coast of Norway, to let him know that she lay at the Gunfleet; and that if he wanted her he might send for her. Thus time was lost; she might have been the messenger herself; and then our Admiral, no doubt, would have gained a decisive victory over the Dutch. The Sampson was indeed sent to him, but she arrived the day after the engagement.

Our Channel fleet was still as formerly, too late to prevent the junction of the French and Spaniards, or even to attempt it. Their fleets appeared again at the mouth of the Channel; Admiral Darby sent an account of it to the Admiralty; but there he was laughed at—he was not believed: the Mayor of Bristol sent to the Admiralty to know if the report was true that the enemy was on the coast; and an answer was sent to him by Mr. Stephens, by order of Lord Sandwich, that there was no such thing; and that Admiral Darby had put back into Torbay, only for refreshments: thus was that Admiral spit upon by the First Lord of the Admiralty; and the information he had given treated as a lie. Such was the manner in which the First Lord of the Admiralty treated an Admiral commanding the naval power of Britain; and such was the sort of treatment which had driven men of fine feelings from the service. He knew not how Admiral Darby felt it; he heard an excellent character of that gentleman, and he believed him to be incapable of brooking so palpable an insult. How it had been settled he knew not, but the fact was so; and further it was perfectly well known, that Admiral Darby had returned to port with the advice of his officers, in consequence of the appearance of the combined fleets. The Mayor, however, received a letter from Lord Shuldham in about a quarter of an hour after the receipt of Mr. Stephen's letter, in which his Lordship confirmed the report, that the enemy were in the Channel, and warned the Mayor to communicate the intelligence to the merchants. The consequence of the Admiralty letter would have been

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to decoy the trade of Bristol into the hands of the enemy, just as Captain Moutray's convoy had been sent into the hands of the Spaniards, by having been ordered to rendezvous at Madeira, while the enemy were cruising in his track. It seemed, however, that though the Admiralty knew nothing of the combined fleets last year in the Channel, or pretended not to know any thing of them, Lord Stormont had written to Mr. Eden in Dublin, to warn him that they were gone to cruise off the coast of Ireland, and it was pretty evident that this letter was precisely of the same date with that from the Admiralty to the Mayor of Bristol, in which that magistrate was informed that the enemy was not on the coast.

The combined fleets separated last year early in September; but our fleet, as usual, was kept at sea to make an empty parade after the enemy had quitted their station. They were cruising about, while Mons. de la Motte Picquet came out, and seized our St. Eustatius fleet, with all the plunder of that island. Comte de Grasse put to sea; and though by a proper use of the force we had at that very time cruising, we might have defeated him, and prevented all the dreadful consequences that afterwards attended his expedition, he was permitted to proceed; and the last consequence of our having suffered him to pass us, was the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, which could never have been effected without his naval force. When Admiral Darby was at Gibraltar with a very fine fleet, he should have been instructed to detach a part of it to the West-Indies, if he should not meet with any opposition in relieving Gibraltar: such instructions would have effectually saved Lord Cornwallis, by giving us a superiority in the West-Indies: but our ministers never thought before-hand; at an earlier period of the war, when Lord Shulldham was sent out with a very capital force, to protect a great convoy, he was not instructed to do any thing against the enemy.

In the West-Indies we had been indulged with Sir George Rodney's frequent promises to give good accounts of the enemy's fleets, when all he had been able to do, was to fight some drawn battles; which were, he contended, generally followed with the loss of some of our islands, and therefore in effect, were as bad as defeats. He had been employed in the despicable plunder of St. Eustatius while the island of Tobago was taken; and the business of this great conquest was not discussed time enough to prevent the catastrophe of our

our American career. But the last measure was the most abandoned of all, and which particularly demanded the investigation of that House, the sending out Admiral Kempenfelt with a force so inferior to that of the enemy. This had impressed the whole kingdom with surprize and indignation, either the Admiralty were deficient in the necessary information, or they were negligent in having taken proper advantage of it; in either case their conduct was equally criminal. —The Ministry had heard, that the French were doing something, and upon inquiry found, that they had fifteen ships of the line at Brest, and two at Rochford. The naval Minister knew the French had twenty one sail, but he took it into his head that only twelve would sail to the West-Indies, not thinking, as he should have done, that the other nine would bear them company to a certain latitude. He therefore thought, as only twelve ships were going to the West-Indies, that twelve ships could intercept them, and Admiral Kempenfelt accordingly is dispatched with that force to intercept them; when lo! as might have been expected, the French fleet amounts to nineteen sail! In consequence of which, the British commander dares not attack them, and the object of their destination is pursued. Providence indeed, so often our friend, interferes; throws some of their transports into our hands, and destroys others by a storm. To render this matter still more censurable, and unfold the designs of the First Lord of the Admiralty, at the very time Admiral Kempenfelt was sent out with an inferior force, ships fit for action were then lying in the Downs and other places. They were indeed stationed there to annoy the Dutch trade, but their being withdrawn a few days from that station could have produced no ill consequence, that could have been put in competition with the advantages that would have been derived from it.

As to Sir George Rodney, no part of his fleet, it was said, could be spared for the purpose of attacking Mons. Vaudreuil. The honourable Gentleman could not but admire this sort of excuse, as if it was not better to stop the French from going to the West-Indies than to follow them thither; for the most that had been urged was, that it would have delayed his sailing to the West-Indies; not thinking, as more rational men would have done, that if Monsieur Vaudreuil could have been destroyed here, there would have been no occasion to have sent any body to another part of the world to have done it.

The honourable gentleman remarked, that we had now been at war for some years, and, excepting in the case of Admiral Kempenfelt, no endeavour had ever been made to intercept the enemy. No one instance had ever presented itself of an attempt to prevent the enemy from sailing. That of Admiral Kempenfelt had been the very first of the kind; and it was therefore no wonder, that the minister of the naval department should have shewn himself such a novice.

It had turned out that the two ships left behind to harass the enemy had done essential service. Unskilled as he was in professional matters, he could not help asking if Admiral Kempenfelt had continued to harass them with his whole force, whether he could not have done infinitely more service with his twelve ships than was effected by the two that did remain at sea; and whether his ships, being copper bottomed, might not have a very great advantage of the enemy?

The honourable gentleman said, that those were the principal points to which he wished the intended inquiry to turn. The year 1781 gave an epitome of all the blunders of the war; and therefore, for the sake of dispatch, he would confine his proposition chiefly to that period; not however forgetting the other years. The leading points in the inquiry then would be the naval operations of 1781 in their regular order---the practice of tearing the ships in winter cruizes; and losing every advantage of local situation, and priority of appearance at sea, to prevent the junction of the enemies. These were the points, and to these every gentleman, whether landman or seaman, would be competent, because they were measures of simple policy. It was a subject which they must enter upon now or hereafter with seriousness. We had acted too long from our hopes; we must now yield to our judgment; and he warned the House not to sport longer with the feelings of a great, suffering nation; nor presume to ruin a people for the sake of a man. He meant to move for a variety of papers, but they were of a nature that would take up but a day or two to prepare. His first motion, that for an inquiry, he doubted not, would pass without objection.

Captain *John Luttrell* desired the honourable gentleman not to be too sure, that even that motion would pass without opposition. Capt. John Luttrell.

Mr. *Fox*, who had been just preparing to read all his motions before he made any one, now changed his mind so far, as to confine himself to his first motion, which was couched in the following words: Mr. Fox.

“ That

“ That it be referred to a committee to inquire into the
 “ causes of the want of success of his Majesty’s naval forces
 “ during this war, and more particularly in the year 1781.”

Before he sat down, Mr. Fox renewed his declaration, that he by no means absolved the First Lord of the Admiralty of all guilt with regard to the first point, which he had stated his reasons for not making a subject of the present inquiry.

The motion was handed to the Speaker, and read by him to the House.

Capt. John
 Luttrell.

Captain *John Luttrell* argued upon the assertion of Lord Mulgrave (in a former debate) relative to the naval superiority of the House of Bourbon over Great-Britain in the reigns of King William and Queen Anne, and observed, that no comparison could be drawn between the reign of Lewis XIV and that of any other French monarch. With regard to the declaration, that “ the First Lord of the Admiralty, who did not keep up a fleet superior to any that the House of Bourbon could at any time send to sea, deserved to lose his head,” which had been so repeatedly and so illiberally charged to the Earl of Sandwich, it struck him in a very different point of view from that in which it appeared to impress the minds of other gentlemen. Allowing that the declaration had been made by the noble Earl to whom it was ascribed, it ought in candour to be considered, that it was made some years ago, and that it was scarcely possible to suppose that Lord Sandwich, at the time, had an idea of this country’s being engaged in a war of so difficult and so extensive a nature as the present.

It had been said, that the present First Lord of the Admiralty had a more numerous and a better conditioned navy put into his hands on his being made First Lord Commissioner, than had ever been delivered into the hands of any of his predecessors; and it had been contended on the other hand, that the fact was directly the reverse; that the fleet was in a miserably rotten and unserviceable state, and that Lord Hawke, though a truly respectable character, and one of the best and most deserving officers that ever commanded the British navy, either had no talents suited to his situation as First Lord of the Admiralty, or that his powers were worn out, or weakened considerably, when he was appointed President of that Board. The truth was, both statements were in some degree erroneous. The navy was not in a good condition when delivered over to the care of the Earl of Sandwich; but still the late Lord Hawke was not to blame. The evil originated

ginated with the Earl of Egmont, his predecessor. During that nobleman's presidency at the Board, Parliament was very niggardly in its grants for the navy service, and though the noble Lord's hands itched as much for money as any other First Lord of the Admiralty, it could not be obtained so easily as of late. During the Earl of Sandwich's being First Lord, Parliament had voted large and liberal supplies, and it would be injustice not to say, that Lord Sandwich had used them most serviceably. Perhaps since England had a navy, our yards were never so full of timber and stores of all kind as at present. In fact, the public had paid handsomely, but it was some comfort to know that their money had been applied usefully.

Even now, low as the state of our marine was reported to be, and broken as the spirit of our officers had been painted, he did not doubt, could this country make peace with Holland and America, but we should shew ourselves superior to the maritime force of the House of Bourbon, and soon recover our empire of the ocean. Not that he meant by this assertion to contend that there was no error in the conduct of our navy; undoubtedly there was much occasion for alteration and amendment, and the first thing likely to produce the most essential service to the country would be to restore unanimity on board our fleets. At present the navy was torn to pieces by dissensions and divisions; officers never saw each other but on duty, they had no longer access to the tables of their superiors, as of old, when an Anson, a Hawke, a Boscawen, a Saunders, and a Keppel commanded. In those better times, all was cordiality, affection and zeal. The commanders took a pride in instructing the inferior officers, and in teaching them their duty; hence there was a means of improvement open to all who chose to profit by it, and the service in general reaped the benefit of it; at that time, likewise, the differences of individuals were accommodated almost as soon as they were known, by the interference of the superiors in command. At present the case was sadly reversed, all was party, disunion, and jealousy, so that officers had no confidence in each other. To remedy this great evil, he would advise immediately calling into the service those veteran commanders, in whose gallantry, skill, and experience, the profession had a firm reliance. Perhaps that House was not aware that, with a few exceptions, those who commanded our different fleets now, were but young captains at the end of the last war---let gentlemen then ask themselves

whether it was likely that men of that stamp could be as capable as officers who had seen infinitely more service, and had been accustomed to undertake enterprizes of noble daring with success? Other lesser matters of error called likewise for correction. One in particular was the cause of great inconvenience and great cost, and this was, the sending home sick men from the West-Indies as unfit for service, by which means they took the bounty-money a second time, and put the nation to a great additional expence as soon as they recovered and were able to enter again. The diseases of the West-Indies were generally such, he said, as affected the mass of blood, and shewed themselves in a debilitation of the faculties, and the eruption of sores and ulcers, not easily curable in those climates. It was the custom, when the poor fellows cases became desperate, to send them home discharged. It generally happened, that as they approached the northern latitudes their constitutions recovered vigour, the blood began to be in a better state, and by the time they reached the shore, they were as fit for service as ever they were in their lives; the general consequence was, that after a little time they applied for fresh bounty money, and went on shipboard again at a considerable expence to the nation. All this might be saved, if instead of being sent home discharged, they were sent home to some of our royal hospitals for cure. Another means there was likewise for preventing this evil, which called loudly on the humanity of the House to interpose its assistance, and preserve the lives of many hundreds of brave seamen, which were yearly sacrificed for the sake of saving a trifling expence. This was to allow the ships destined for the West-Indies to take a larger quantity of bark on board. At present, exactly the same proportion was shipped in the men of war destined for Channel service, or for service in the North Seas, as on board those ships which went to a West-India station, or were sent on an expedition to the Southward. So much was the want of more bark felt by those who had been so employed; and such was the general declaration of its utility against the disorders in question, by the ablest and most experienced surgeons in the navy, that he had known ship's companies desire to have a larger proportion of bark among their medicinal stores, and offer to commute for it, by giving up a part of their James's powders, and elixir of vitriol, both of which were allowed to be very serviceable and salutary recipes in a variety of disorders common to seamen. But whenever an application was made

to the Board of Commissioners for the sick and wounded, to make the exchange he had mentioned, the constant answer was, that unless Parliament provided for the additional expence, it was impossible to allow a larger proportion of bark. This and other matters which he could point out, were it a fit occasion, called for the interposition of Parliament, and if remedied would be of great advantage to the navy. With regard to the present inquiry, he thought it a very impolitic measure, and were there no other reason to induce him to object to it, he should do it from a consciousness that it could not end in any thing satisfactory; gentlemen well knew that they had no right to examine witnesses upon oath at their bar, whence it might happen that a great deal of the time of the House at that important period, might be spent to no sort of purpose; collusive evidence might be given, and those who gave it, might laugh in the lobby, at the imposition they had practised, while new delusion was holding out to the House by new witnesses. Another and a still stronger reason for his objecting to the inquiry was, that he thought this a most unfit moment for such a business. It would only sow the seeds of greater animosity and dissention in the navy than at present prevailed; and without doing any one possible good to the service, would tend to depreciate the name of the Earl of Sandwich in the eyes of all Europe; a matter which he conceived ought studiously to be avoided as long as he presided at so important a Board as the Board of Admiralty. Mr. Luttrell said, he had spoken fairly and candidly: convinced of the merits of Lord Sandwich, he had endeavoured to do them justice; and he had freely pointed out the particulars in which he thought the navy misconducted. If gentlemen were capable of putting the superintendancy of our marine into hands more able, and more zealous to serve the country than the present First Lord of the Admiralty, he would willingly join in such a proposition; but till that House was assured, that the nation would benefit by an exchange, he certainly should be for continuing so active and so capable a nobleman as the Earl of Sandwich in his office; on which account, and for the reasons he had stated, he most certainly should give his negative to the motion.

Mr. *Percival* vindicated the honour of Lord Egmont, Mr. *Percival* who, he said, had acted with as much integrity in his office as any gentleman who had ever been in it; and he appealed to the professional gentlemen who knew him, and had been witnesses of his probity, and would attest his honour.

Lord Mulgrave.

Lord *Mulgrave* prefaced his speech with a handsome compliment to the administration of Lord Egmont when at the head of the administration of the Admiralty. He then said, that he should not follow the honourable gentleman who made the motion, through all the detail of his argument; instead of that cool, temperate, and candid style of reasoning, in which a subject of so much seriousness and importance ought to have been treated, the honourable gentleman had thought proper, previous to the inquiry being gone into, to calumniate the First Lord of the Admiralty, to load him with the grossest invective, to accuse him of great criminality, and that in a variety of instances; and, instead of attempting to bring forward any thing like proof, to resort to matters totally foreign to the subject under consideration. What had the supposed connection between the Earl of Sandwich and the East-India company to do with the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty? And was it fair, in that stage of the business, to affect to stile the noble Lord the ally of France, and to charge him with something like treachery, and that of the basest kind? He trusted, the generosity and good sense of the House would revolt at attacks so made, and introduced at that moment, which of all others should have been the most free from the smallest appearance of deviation from candour. The honourable gentleman accused men in place on the ground that they had less property than official emolument; was the argument a good one? If it was, might it not be just as fair for him to say, that the public were to the full as likely to be well served by them, as by those who acknowledged that the chief foundation of their opposition was a wish to get into place, and who had neither property nor office. But this was too brazen-faced, too dirty an argument for him to use with any seriousness; it was like that to which he had just opposed it; they were both of them unworthy of being heard within those walls, and merited contempt. With regard to a great part of the honourable gentleman's speech, it went merely to matters of opinion, to points on which men of great ability and great integrity might fairly be allowed to differ; the honourable gentleman, therefore, with respect to them, and indeed to every fact he had mentioned, could only have spoken presumptively. He wished, however, for the sake of fully satisfying the public, and doing substantial justice to the character of the First Lord of the Admiralty, that the honourable gentleman had not proposed so narrow a

scale

scale of inquiry. The more broad it was made, the more likely was the House to come at the truth, and consequently the ends of justice would have been the more fully answered. The honourable gentleman had said, the noble Lord was culpable for not having built more ships. True, where there was a sufficient depth of water, slips might be formed. But when slips were built, was nothing else requisite for the equipment of a navy? Would the forming of slips supply them with necessary stores, provisions, and men? Were ships and every necessary to be produced from sowing? Would they grow up complete like a field of grain?

The honourable gentleman had entered into matters which it was not possible to investigate; a matter of inquiry respecting the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty. They consisted of occurrences which depended more on opinion than testimony. In respect to those circumstances of the war, they could not have the least reference to the conduct of the noble Lord, as a criminal. They were dependent on such contingencies as might appear to arise more from accident than conduct. Besides he desired it might be remembered, that whatever was the issue of their inquiry, that no reflection should be cast on that Board for withholding any thing that related to the official conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty. For it was their desire to go into it in a manner that should either criminate him for negligence, incapacity, or treachery; otherwise clear him to the honour of his profession and personal character.

He complained of the manner in which the honourable gentleman had spoken of the circumstance of Admiral Darby's return last year, and the treatment which he had received from the Admiralty. Would any man of the proud honour and nice feelings of Admiral Darby stoop to treatment such as had been described so warmly by the honourable gentleman? Would he not have resented the indignity with that firmness which he trusted a British Admiral would always express when his honour or veracity were called in question. The fact was, that Admiral Darby received information from a vessel that the combined fleets were off Scilly, and he consulted his officers, a majority of whom advised him to return to port: but there were among those officers, and he was one of them himself, several who disbelieved the intelligence. With respect to the apparent inconsistency between the letters of Mr. Stephens to the mayor of Bristol, and that of Lord Stormont to Ireland; the inconsistency would vanish when the honourable gentleman knew,
that

that instead of four days, an express went to Dublin in two days. The noble Lord concluded with saying, that he wished the honourable gentleman had made his inquiry on a larger scale, for the broader the inquiry the more complete would have been the acquittal and triumph of the First Lord of the Admiralty.

Mr. Fitz-
herbert.

Mr. Fitzherbert spoke next. He said that he naturally felt the emotion which was natural to a young speaker, but he must beg leave to remark, that on the navy of this country depended the very existence of the state; it was our greatest bulwark, it was our only defence; by it we had been raised to the highest pinnacle of grandeur, without it, we should still feel the dreadful effects we had so lately experienced; it was, therefore, a subject which ought to engross the attention of every member of that House. He declared, he had it from the authority of the different French officers, who landed at Portsmouth, corroborated also by the officers who landed at Plymouth, that such powerful strides had been made by the House of Bourbon, towards having a superiority in their marine, that would not only be astonishing to that House, but had astonished all Europe. The keel of the Couronne, an eighty gun ship, that was under Mons. de Guichen, in the fleet which Admiral Kempenfelt fell in with, was only laid on the 14th of May last; and a still stronger instance was that of the Pegasus, a seventy gun ship in the same fleet, the hulk of which was laid, and the ship fitted for and at sea in three months and five days. This, he said, naturally led him to consider the cause, why the fleets of this country, which formerly rode triumphant on the seas, should experience that inferiority which so fatally appeared to be the case of late? It was not, he was persuaded, from a neglect in the particular officers, but it was owing to a want of shipwrights. He would only speak to the central yard (meaning Portsmouth) because he lived in the neighbourhood of it, and passed much of his time there; ships we had in plenty to build ships of the line on, and there was also plenty of all kinds of materials, but there was not a sufficient number of artificers to put those materials together. There were now, Mr. Fitzherbert said, four slips ready to build ships of the line on. The keel and frame of the St. George had been laid upwards of four years, and both were now perishing for want of shipwrights to finish her; the frame of the Leopard was in the same situation; the frame of the Bulwark had been cut out these four years, and not a single hand could be spared to work on her.

There

There was also another slip, from which the *Warrior* was lately launched, but so small was the number of shipwrights that not any could be spared, at least very few indeed, to be employed on the new work. Should our fleet come in disabled, either by distress of weather, or in consequence of an engagement with the enemy, he declared, we had scarce hands sufficient to repair the damage, and send the ships to sea in any reasonable time. He repeated, that he confined himself to Portsmouth, because he lived in its neighbourhood, and had more frequent occasion to visit its dock-yard than any other; and although he was well aware of the evil tendency of raising the price of wages in this country, yet he could not but be of opinion, that sufficient encouragement was not given to the old and deserving shipwrights. Men who had passed their whole time in the service of their country, and were able to perform the laborious part of the mechanical branch, would not, he said, submit to receive 2s. 1d. per day for their time, and the most they could get with the extra, was 3s. 4d. when they could earn at a merchant's yard, by working by measure, seven, eight, nine, or ten shillings per day. We need not wonder, that France had made such rapid strides in the increase of her marine, when at the port of Brest they had upwards of three thousand shipwrights, whereas at the central and principal yard in this kingdom, to which he had been alluding, we had only eight hundred, including apprentices. At the commencement of the present troubles, had apprentices been given to the most deserving shipwrights in his Majesty's different yards, who could produce certificates of their having kept their time, and been good workmen, Mr. Fitzherbert said, it would not only have rewarded the old, but encouraged the young; and we might then have had double the number of shipwrights we had at this time. The good effects of which would have been experienced in our having a navy superior to the present. So far was this from having been the case, that last year, in Portsmouth yard, only twenty apprentices were allowed to all the different shipwrights, twenty-nine of whom left the yard, and twelve died.

Lord North said, he by no means disapproved of an inquiry into the conduct of the Admiralty. It was what Lord Sandwich and the other members who composed the Board most anxiously wished for. There was nothing they more eagerly desired, than that a full, candid, and fair inquiry into their whole conduct should be set on foot; because they were

were convinced, instead of being found guilty of those many enormous crimes the honourable gentleman who made the motion would impute to them, it would appear from their zeal and exertions in their official capacity, they merited the highest praise from their country. Before the recess, when the affair which gave rise to the present inquiry was before the House, the members of the Admiralty, conscious of the rectitude of their actions, challenged the opposition to scrutinize, in the fullest manner, their conduct. But instead of coinciding with the wishes of the Admiralty-board, what had gentlemen in the opposition done? why, after publicly and privately calumniating them, and accusing them of neglect in increasing our navy, though they had many opportunities of doing it, and of letting those ships, they had decay away, and, in general, of total incapacity to fill up an office of such importance; totally regardless of all those assertions, because they were persuaded they were groundless, they had instituted an inquiry of so confined a nature, that it was impossible, consistent with justice, to form any resolution that might censure the First Lord of the Admiralty. However, he looked on the present motion to be of such a tendency, as to affect not only Lord Sandwich, but every member of administration. For though every First Lord of the Admiralty must of course have great influence, when any naval question was agitated in council, yet he had but a single voice, and the rest were equally with him answerable for his conduct. For this reason, so far as concerned him, he was not averse to the present motion. It had been intimated that he acted inconsistently in this affair; for, says the honourable gentleman, had you acted agreeable to your wishes for an examination of this kind before the recess, you should have moved the present inquiry, and have convinced the nation, the charges against the First Lord of the Admiralty were groundless. Would you have me such an idiot, said the noble Lord, as to accuse administration, who coincided in those measures which Mr. Fox would now reprobate? It would be not only to impeach my own capacity and honesty, but the abilities and integrity of the other servants of the Crown. As to himself, he candidly owned the honourable gentleman's superiority in the former, but in the latter he would yield to no man. His Lordship answered several of Mr. Fox's arguments, particularly those on the people's power of removal of a minister, and the propriety of such a step, without assigning any reason

son for the measure. That was a doctrine, his Lordship said, to which he could not subscribe, and more especially in the extent that the honourable gentleman had carried his idea to. The honourable gentleman had said, that even if he was convinced of a minister's merit, the public were justified in directing his removal; certainly he should neither admit nor argue, that because a minister had merit, it was a fit cause for his removal; as little should he allow, that removing a minister did not in itself carry an implication of censure, and therefore was not unjust. His Lordship said, that as the year 1781 would bring the object of the inquiry nearer to Ministers in general than any other year of the war, he certainly would not oppose the motion, though he begged the House to know, that the First Lord of the Admiralty, as well as himself, was ready to meet an inquiry of a much more extensive nature.

Mr. *Townshend* expressed his astonishment how the noble Lord who spoke last, could possibly conceive that the present motion was limited to any particular period, or referred to any particular fact, merely through want of sufficient proofs to shew the criminalty of Lord Sandwich: on the contrary, it arose from a certain persuasion, that while he continued in office, no charges could be brought against him with any probability of success; the influence he possessed from his high station would ever render nugatory any attempts to bring him to the punishment he merited.

He then adverted to what had fallen from the honourable gentleman (Mr. Luttrell). He was sorry to hear the honourable gentleman complain that his words had been tortured into a meaning which he had never meant them to express. But especially when he was informed by an honourable gentleman beside him, that he himself was the person alluded to. However, as far as he could trust his memory, which he thought was as far as the credit of such an officious testimony might be trusted, he could inform the honourable gentleman, that he had never taken up that honourable gentleman's expression but in his presence; he should, therefore, take the same liberty in the present instance. Not that he meant to say any thing that might degrade his sentiments; for, in his opinion, they were such as characterized the profession to which he was a great honour. He spoke from principle, while the noble Lord before him spoke with more parliamentary management. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Luttrell) had objected to the inquiry because he thought it

might be dangerous to the interest of his country. But the noble Lord at the head of the Treasury, and sometimes recognized by the more distinguished title of the prime minister, was desirous of an inquiry beyond what his accusers require. He then adverted to the description which the honourable gentleman (Mr. Luttrell) had given of the state of the officers of the navy. He considered it the most melancholy description that could possibly be conceived. Our naval force desisting from operation, through disaffection and distrust of their appointments, our officers undisciplined and inexperienced, our admirals all created, except in two or three instances, from junior captains in the late war. Were not these sufficient grounds for removing the First Lord of the Admiralty? that his appointments were such as disgusted the service. It destroyed that unanimity, that ardour, which was essential to the restoration of our prosperity.

The motion was agreed to without a division, Mr. John Luttrell giving it a single negative.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox then moved, "that it be referred to a committee of the whole House, on Thursday next." This was agreed to *nem. con.*

He next rose to move for twenty-four different papers, necessary for the purpose of the inquiry.

Ld. North.

Lord North objected to those papers, which by giving the letters of those persons who were employed abroad to furnish this country with intelligence might endanger their lives, and do essential injury to the state.

Lord Mulgrave.

Lord Mulgrave spoke on the same ground, and added, that in all probability there might be circumstances in those communications which would effectually point out the persons to the enemies of our country; or perhaps they might contain particulars which would be profitable if concealed in the future operations of the naval war.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox replied, that he moved only for the letters as necessary to elucidate such matters as might relate to the intelligence which the First Lord of the Admiralty had received. For there were two circumstances contained in the charges of this inquiry which depended entirely upon those papers he moved to be laid before the House. These were, whether it appeared the noble Lord had obtained proper intelligence? or, if he had, whether he had in consequence made proper arrangements?

Did

Did the ministry after their loud boasting mean to deny those necessary documents? if they did, the public would know how to distinguish between their words and conduct. They found fault with him for making his inquiry so narrow, and yet on this narrow ground they shewed a disposition of defeating every thing that was attempted. This would shew the House the reason why he had chosen to bring the inquiry to a close point. He knew the difficulties with which he had to encounter, in struggling with men possessed of power and inclination to resist the wishes of those with whom he had the honour to act.

Sir *Richard Sutton* spoke on the other side, as did the Secretary at War, and contended, that it was a duty incumbent upon his Majesty's ministers, to take care that no hasty motion should pass that might endanger the lives of useful and most necessary persons, who hazarded every thing in the service of the country.

Sir Richard
Sutton.

The honourable *William Pitt* said, it was evident the noble Lord, under the pretence of saving particular persons from danger, who were concerned in the intelligence, meant to evade the whole inquiry; they seemed desirous of showing their innocence, but took every means of concealing their guilt. He afterwards moved, that as an objection was made to producing such intelligence as was absolutely requisite for the inquiry, on account of the danger which might befall particular persons concerned, that only the substance of such intelligence should be laid before the House. This amendment met the sense of the House, and after some little conversation it was adopted. Several of the motions were put off by consent to the next day, to give the Lords of the Admiralty time to inquire and see whether they might be safely granted, and the following papers were, by motion, ordered to be laid upon the table.

The Hon.
W. Pitt.

1. The substance of the intelligence received of the movements of the Spanish fleets at Cadiz and Ferrol, in the months of February and March 1781.

2. An extract of such part of Vice Admiral Darby's instructions, on his sailing to the relief of Gibraltar, as may relate to any orders given to him to detach to the West-Indies from the Straits in 1781.

3. A copy of Vice Admiral Parker's appointment to the command, upon Vice Admiral Darby leaving the Channel in March 1781; also of Mr. Secretary Stephens's letter to

Vice Admiral Parker, upon the service that would be required of him.

4. The substance of the intelligence received at any time of the equipment and sailing of Monsieur de la Motte Piquet's squadron at Brest, after Vice Admiral Darby's sailing in March 1781.

5. The substance of the intelligence received at any time of the equipment and sailing of Monsieur de Grasse with his force for the West-Indies, in the months of February and March 1781.

6. The substance of the intelligence received of Monsieur De Guichen's equipment in May and June 1781, and of his sailing from Brest for Cadiz.

7. Extract of such parts of Vice Admiral Darby's instructions on his sailing with the fleet in July 1781, as may relate to his endeavouring to prevent the junction of the French and Spanish squadrons; also his weekly account of the number and state of the ships he sailed with.

8. A copy of a letter from the mayor of Bristol to Mr. Stephens, upon the subject of the combined fleets; with Mr. Stephens's answer.

9. A copy or extract of a letter from the Lord Viscount Stormont, one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state, informing the government of Ireland of the appearance of the combined fleets in August 1781.

10. Weekly returns of the state of the king's ships, from the middle of July to the 1st of August 1781, from Portsmouth, the Downs, the Nore, and Sheerness.

11. The substance of the intelligence received of the French armament at Brest, at any time from the month of September to the sailing of Rear Admiral Kempenfelt on the 6th of December 1781.

12. Weekly accounts of the state and condition of his Majesty's ships in the different ports at home the last week in November, and the first week in December, 1781.

13. Extracts of such parts of instructions given to Sir Charles Hardy and Admiral Geary as may relate to their endeavouring to prevent a junction between the French and Spanish squadrons, during their respective commands.

14. A list of frigates and cruizers employed before the port of Brest, to watch the motions of the enemy's ships there, from the 1st of January, 1779, to the 1st of January, 1782; specifying the number of ships and frigates, and dates when so employed.

15. The

15. The substance of the intelligence received from the West-Indies, relative to the detention of the Jamaica fleet in 1781.

January 25.

Mr. Fox rose to make the motions which, on the close of the debate of yesterday, were by both sides of the House referred over to this day as granted, provided that upon the inspection of the papers they required, administration might see nothing in them which, being disclosed, could possibly prove of detriment to the nation. In running over the business, he was interrupted by

Lord North, merely that his Lordship might be informed whether the honourable mover designed to introduce any new motion among those which had been already agitated.

Mr. Fox acquainted him, but one or two, which were amended ones, and he was sure would pass without opposition. He then proceeded, but was a little after interrupted again, by a question from

Lord Mulgrave, who desired to know, whether, in the correspondence required to be laid before the committee, of the admirals with the Admiralty, the honourable gentleman meant to include some secret, though general instructions, which it was usual for the Admiralty to issue to every one of our naval commanders?

Mr. Fox informed him he did not desire the disclosure of any thing which ought to be concealed; however he would reserve the one which appeared objectionable till Monday, that in the mean time administration might be satisfied with their propriety. He then once more resumed the remainder of his string of motions, and got through them entirely.

Mr. Minchen then moved, that there be laid before the House an account of all the Admirals, commissioned officers, and other officers in the navy, who are now absent from their duty, together with the reasons thereof.

Lord Mulgrave begged to know what the honourable gentleman meant by the word reasons in his motion? Possibly the gentleman wished to know the reason, which every officer, applying for leave of absence, assigned to his application---if so, the Admiralty could have no objection to gratify him---but without some such explanation the present term was too general.

Mr.

Mr. Minchin not appearing quite satisfied with this limitation,

Mr. Bamber
Gascoyne.

Mr. *Bamber Gascoyne* got up, and was beginning to expatiate on the absurdity as well as indecency of requiring the Admiralty to pry minutely into the affairs of the gentlemen of the navy, whose occasions might require their absence.

But Admiral Keppel, fully explaining the nature of these applications, they acquiesced in the propriety of the motion.

Lord Howe

Lord *Howe* moved, that an account be laid before the House of all those ships which had been ordered to be got ready for Admiral Rodney's expedition to the West-Indies, together with the report of such as were, in consequence of that order, declared to be in readiness, with the respective dates of the order and report; as also the number of ships, the names of their commanders, the numbers of their men and guns respectively, which actually sailed upon that expedition. He observed that this motion could not possibly detriment it now, else he would not have made it. It passed without objection.

In consequence of these motions the following papers were ordered to be laid upon the table.

1. The substance of all information of the state and readiness of the Dutch naval force, and particularly the state of the Texel immediately previous to his Majesty's proclamation, directing hostilities; also the substance of all information, obtained by the Admiralty, or any of his Majesty's ministers, describing the force and practicability of a squadron of the king's ships entering the Texel by force.

2. An extract from Admiral Darby's letter to the Admiralty, on his leaving Spithead, in March 1781, to ascertain the day of his sailing; also such extracts of his letters to Mr. Stephens from the coast of Ireland, as may relate to his junction with the victuallers off that coast, to his force to the time of his sailing from thence, and any information he might have himself received, and thought proper to transmit to the Admiralty, concerning the French and Spanish fleets being at sea.

3. The information sent by the Admiralty to Sir George Rodney, apprising him of the sailing of Monsieur De Grasse for the West-Indies, in March 1781.

4. The weekly accounts of the state and condition of his Majesty's ships fitting and in readiness at Plymouth, Portsmouth, and the Downs, immediately after the sailing of
Vice

Vice Admiral Darby, the 13th March 1781; and also for the last week in March and second week in April 1781.

5. All such extracts from Sir George Rodney's letters to the Admiralty as relate to his informing them of his sending Commodore Hotham to England with the property captured at St. Eustatius.

6. All such extracts from Vice Admiral Darby's letters to the Admiralty as contain his reasons for leaving his station, sent either from sea, or on his arrival at Torbay in August 1781, with Mr. Stephens's answers.

7. All such extracts from Vice Admiral Parker's letters to the Admiralty, and from their Lordships to the Vice Admiral, as may contain information relative to the Dutch squadron and their movements, to the Vice Admiral's requisitions, and the Admiralty's intentions of sending reinforcements in time. Also

8. A copy of Vice Admiral Parker's letter to the Admiralty, giving an account of his action with the Dutch squadron off the Dogger Bank, Aug. 5th, 1781, or all such extracts from that letter as may relate to the action. Also

9. Such extracts from Vice Admiral Darby's letters to Mr. Stephens, as contain the state and condition of the ships under his command on their return from their cruise in November 1781. Also

10. Such extracts of Rear Admiral Kempenfelt's correspondence with the Admiralty, as relate to the objects of his command from the time of his appointment, and of the instructions with which he sailed in December 1781, and the intelligence given to him by the Admiralty, or any of his Majesty's ministers, relative to the force of the enemy. Also

11. A copy of Rear Admiral Kempenfelt's letter to the Admiralty, upon his falling in with the French fleet in December 1781. Also

12. A list of the French and English fleets in the action between Sir Samuel Hood and Monsieur De Grasse off Point Salines, with all such extracts from Sir Samuel Hood's letter to the Admiralty as give an account of that action. Also

13. An account of ships and frigates employed for the defence of the island of Jersey, in the month of January 1781. Also

14. An account of the number of ships of war lately sailed under the command of Admiral Sir George Rodney for the West-Indies, specifying the times when they were respectively ordered to be fitted for that service, the times they were

were severally reported to be ready for sea; together with the names of the ships, and the commanders of them, at their different periods. And also

15. A list of the names of the admirals, captains, and other commanders, born for full pay in his Majesty's fleet now absent from their duty, with the reasons in their applications.

January 28.

George
Yonge.

Sir *George Yonge* complained of a person named Broughton, an elector of Honiton, who had committed a scandalous breach of privilege, by endeavouring to impede the orders of that House, and preventing the execution of them. He was ordered to attend.

Lord Mul-
grave.

Lord *Mulgrave* said he was sorry that the honourable member who had moved that the committee on the naval inquiry should sit on Thursday next, was not then in the House; he had sent him notice on Sunday that he (Lord Mulgrave) would move this day, for discharging that order, and making a new one for the sitting of the committee on Thursday sevensnight, because the papers which had been moved for as necessary to the inquiry, could not possibly be ready by Thursday next. This, as soon as he knew it, he communicated to Mr. Fox; and the honourable member had sent him for answer, that he should be in his place in the House on Monday: but he was sorry to hear now that the honourable gentleman was prevented by indisposition from attending. His Lordship however said, that he would wait till to-morrow, if necessary; and then would make the motion he had mentioned.

Mr. T.

Townshend.

Mr. *T. Townshend* was not less sorry for the indisposition of his honourable friend, than astonished at the intention of the noble Lord to put off the inquiry, after ministers had in a manner defied it. It was singular that they did not know that the papers would be voluminous. They did not say a word at that time. On Thursday they were to go into this business. It was not therefore probable that another opportunity would occur, as the next day there was to be a ballot, and Wednesday was a holiday. They would be left therefore altogether in doubt whether it was to come on on Thursday or not. He was proceeding, when he was interrupted by the Speaker, who informed him that there was no question before the House, and that it would be disorderly to proceed merely

upon a notice of a motion given by the noble Lord. A conversation upon order succeeded, which, after some time, was ended by

Lord *Mulgrave*, who hearing himself called upon by Mr. Lord *Mulgrave*. Byng, to make his motion then, rose for the purpose of making it. He said, if gentlemen supposed it was the wish or desire of the Admiralty to delay the inquiry for the purpose of delay, they were very much mistaken: the Admiralty had defied, provoked, challenged the inquiry; and had only to regret that the gentlemen on the other side of the House had narrowed the scale on which the noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty was earnest that it should have been conducted: but since those gentlemen had, for purposes best known to themselves, directed the whole of the inquiry to one single object, it was the wish of the noble Earl, who was most interested in the event of the inquiry, to lay before the House, in the most clear and ample manner, those documents which had been moved for; and he wished it the more, as he was conscious, that what his enemies imagined would furnish the great grounds for their repeated investigations against him, would furnish on the contrary, the most irrefragable proofs of his innocence; and that what they fondly hoped would cover him with disgrace, would point him out to his countrymen as an able, zealous, and meritorious servant of the public; those documents would dispel the mists of prejudice that had been raised about that noble Earl's character; and shew him in his true colours, a faithful and active minister. Nothing therefore was meant by the wished-for delay of the inquiry, than that the Admiralty might have time to make out these documents in the most clear and satisfactory manner for the House, and for the public. When the honourable member (Mr. Fox) moved for the inquiry, he had the day fixed for Thursday next, before he made his motions (of which he had such a number in his hand at the time, that he could scarcely grasp them) for the various papers that he thought necessary to the inquiry: he had made it a request of the honourable gentleman to withdraw some of these motions, till the Lords of the Admiralty should have an opportunity to look into their books, and see if in any of the papers to be moved for, there were any which it would not be proper to grant: the honourable member complied with his request: when the House was rising he asked the honourable gentleman for a copy of the motions he had withdrawn; and received for answer, that he would very readily

give him copies of them if he had any : but that he would send them to him the next day : this, however, he had omitted to do : the next day was Friday ; when that honourable member made the motions he had withdrawn the preceding day, together with some new ones, which he had not mentioned before. It was therefore Saturday morning before his Lordship had an opportunity to refer to the books at the Admiralty ; he had examined them all that day ; he continued his labour on Sunday morning ; and then found, that the papers moved for would be so voluminous that it would be absolutely impossible to have them ready by Thursday next : sitting in the midst of these books and papers, he wrote a card on Sunday morning to the honourable member, to acquaint him with this circumstance ; and had intimated at the same time his intention to move for adjourning the sitting of the committee to Thursday sevensnight ; the answer he received was that he (Mr. Fox) would be in the House on this day. No time had been lost by the Admiralty in looking into their books ; the earliest notice was given that it would be impossible to have the papers that had been ordered by the House ready by next Thursday : by Thursday sevensnight however every thing would be ready for the inquiry ; not that he meant by this that the papers could not be produced much sooner. He hoped that by Monday he should be able to lay them on the table ; and between that day and Thursday gentlemen would have time to peruse them. He wished that the honourable mover had been present, but from what had been said by gentlemen on the other side, he trusted that it would not be imputed to him, that in making the motion now he had treated the honourable gentleman with disrespect ; nor he trusted, would any man believe that he was capable of descending to the meanness of a manoeuvre in wishing to protract the inquiry for a week longer. Having said this much, his Lordship moved that the order for going into the committee on Thursday next be discharged ; and a new order, made for the sitting of the committee on Thursday sevensnight.

Mr. T.
Townshend.

Mr. T. Townshend said, that it was for sinister purposes, and not merely on the grounds mentioned by the noble Lord, that the delay was wished for : he could not conceive that the papers moved for would be as voluminous as his Lordship described them ; nor did he think that much time would be necessary to digest or put them into proper form ; for many of them had already appeared in print ; many others contained

contained nothing more than the instructions given to our own officers; all the mighty business that could require any little time or labour, would be that of digesting the substance of the intelligence received from our spies abroad: therefore as he could not be persuaded that the whole put together would be either voluminous, or laborious, he could not augur well of the wished-for delay: and it appeared to him rather ominous that those who had so readily agreed to the inquiry, nay provoked it, should now be so desirous to shelter themselves from it by delay.

He remarked, that it was very evident for what ministry protracted the space set apart for the inquiry. There were various descriptions of men in that House, who were to be dealt with according to their different feelings previous to the opening of that business; some were to be convinced one way, and some another. Some were to have promises made to them, and some promises performed: in short, the troops that wavered were to be fixed, and those who were confirmed, were to be assuredly kept so; besides, it was hoped by this management, that the supporters of the motion for the inquiry would be wearied out and deterred from their duty, on seeing so many obstacles thrown in their way, under the persuasion that Administration had not taken such extraordinary pains without a certainty of screening themselves. The inquiry was not a matter of yesterday, it had been known for months that it would take place, and the papers were such as must obviously have been expected to be moved for; they ought therefore to have been ready. He knew that a Lord of the Admiralty might absent himself from his duty at sea, and being a member of Parliament he might run down into the country in a recess, leaving his duty elsewhere wholly unattended to; but in this case the public newspapers had declared, that during the recess the clerks of the Admiralty were all busily employed in preparing such papers as would be necessary to be produced to Parliament, as evidence upon the naval inquiry, that was expected to take place after the holidays. Besides, how was the noble Lord's time employed, that he never found out that the papers moved for, part of them on Thursday and part of them on Friday, were extremely voluminous, and would take up much time to prepare, till Sunday evening, [Lord Mulgrave said across the House, "my words were Sunday morning."] "Good God, exclaimed Mr. Townshend, in a vein of strong irony, here do I stand convicted,

before this House, and in the face of my country, of having stated a transaction to have taken place on Sunday evening, when from the testimony of a Lord of the Admiralty, it appears that it really took place on Sunday morning ! What a wicked misrepresentation have I been guilty of ? Sunday morning be it, however, and I still say, I cannot help feeling a little surprize that the noble Lord did not sooner discover, what he has this day stated to be, the reason that has induced him to move to discharge the order of Thursday last; an order, in the framing of which he had, for ought I know, as much to do as my honourable friend."

Mr. Byng.

Mr. Byng remarked that it had an ill appearance, that the Admiralty should wish to put off the inquiry for Thursday next: on that day the House was to be called over; and therefore a pretty full attendance might be expected; and it was only in a full House that so important an inquiry should take place: but perhaps ministers did not think the attendance sufficiently great. On the 21st, when the House was called over for the first time, there were a great many absentees on the ministerial side: the delay might give them time to come to town; and perhaps during the time gained by the delay, ministers might be able to convince many other members, by irresistible arguments, that the management of the navy was such as must do honour to Lord Sandwich. Those very likely were the great objects of ministers in putting off the inquiry for another week; and therefore it was the duty of the real friends to their country to oppose a delay, not calculated for the benefit of the country. He had proposed the call of the House, and he had incurred much censure, because there had been no material business. Now that it was put off for a week longer he should incur much more censure. He saw no earthly reason for the delay, unless that which his honourable friend had pointed out of an intention of management in the Admiralty, so as all former inquiries had been managed and defeated.

Sir James
Marriott.

Sir James Marriott begged of the gentlemen on the other side of the House, to consider the nature of the business which occupied the attention of the House. It was a judicial inquiry. The gentlemen had brought severe charges against the Admiralty Board, and they had called for documents to support and prove those charges. The evidence on both sides was to be brought forward; by whom? By the party accused. So far this business differed from the practice of the Courts below; for here the party accused was called upon to bring forward the evidence by which the charge

charge against him was to be proved. Was it not necessary that he should have time to do this? The clerks in the office could not prepare the papers without the assistance and inspection of the principals of the Board. It was a task for the Lords of the Admiralty themselves to look over carefully, to digest and arrange those papers; and in executing the order, prepare also the defence of the First Lord of the Admiralty. The evidence on both sides was contained in the papers that were called for. It was a most serious and important inquiry. The eyes of all Britain were now upon the conduct of the Parliament, and therefore would it be wise, would it be right, would it be candid, to hurry a business which could only be done well by being done deliberately? It was surely right in the Admiralty to come forward in the business, and tell the House when they could have the papers ready: they did so; they said Thursday sevensnight. The House then understood, that on Thursday sevensnight the inquiry was to come on peremptorily; they were to have no further delays, and as this was but a single week, it could not surely be any great difference to gentlemen, or to the nation in general. It would be known, and perfectly understood, that it was to come on peremptorily on that day as now settled.

In the instance of the inquiry in question, he took the charge to be two-fold, and to consist of these parts—Either that the Earl of Sandwich, (as First Lord of the Admiralty,) was in possession of material and important intelligence, which he neglected to take that advantage of which his duty to his country rendered indispensibly necessary; or, that the Earl of Sandwich was destitute of that information which it was his duty to have procured; and that not having procured such information had proved fatal to the interest of that state, in the administration of whose executive government he held a responsible situation.

In order to make out either part of this weighty charge, a variety of papers had been called for, that were to serve the purpose of both sides of the inquiry; and to form a body of evidence, in which was to be found proof of the criminality, or proof of the innocence of the party charged with such a criminal neglect of duty.

Sir James declared, he spoke not from any prejudice one way or the other, he meant not to favour the Earl of Sandwich any more, than he should wish to be supposed illiberal enough to pronounce a censure upon him before his conduct

duct was investigated, and facts established, that amounted to prove his meriting censure; but it was due to the noble Lord from motives of delicacy, and from principles of justice, that the inquiry should be coolly and deliberately conducted, that no reasonable desire of further time for preparation should be refused, and that the whole should be marked with singular candour, temper, and solemnity.

Mr. Bamber
Gascoyne.

Mr. *Bamber Gascoyne* said, that no moment had been lost in the preparation of the papers at the Admiralty. As soon as it was known what were all the papers that were wanted, which was not till Saturday morning, they instantly set about collecting and arranging them for the copying clerks. On Saturday morning it was found they were so voluminous, that without taking all the persons in the office from the necessary detail of duty, in all the several parts, and employing even the Secretary and every other person, from morning till night, they could not prepare them in time. Now would gentlemen wish to bring on the inquiry without the papers; or did it look like management and manoeuvre to come forward fairly, as soon as they saw they could not execute the order to the moment, and inform the House of the fact? There had been a great deal of abuse, and invective, and calumny, against the First Lord of the Admiralty; — and there might be now a great deal of calumny — and a great many words about this delay — but words were but wind, and this House was full of wind. — It was certainly the most windy place in the kingdom, and as the sailor called it, there was a great deal of foul wind. He however did not mind it. No person with candour and firmness would say, that the Admiralty wished to shrink from the inquiry. They desired to have it; they wished that it had been made on broader ground, and not as it was; confined to one line, and that a very narrow one. They hoped that they would have instituted an inquiry into the whole of the naval system and management since the commencement of the war. But he supposed that the gentlemen themselves who had begun this inquiry, found that they had gone too far, and wished that they might get out of the disgraceful predicament of having made violent and unjust charges, session after session, against the Board of Admiralty.

With regard to the insinuations about art and management, that had been thrown out, they were not worthy an answer; had any such design either been thought of or resolved upon, the noble Lord who made the motion had too

open and too manly a mind to suffer himself to be made the instrument of it. Equally unworthy of an answer was what an honourable gentleman had thought proper to throw out, of a first lord of the Admiralty's going into the country during the recess. That gentleman, perhaps, was the only one who would say he thought it a matter either to be blamed or wondered at, that a member of Parliament, whose professional duty had kept him at sea all the summer, should take advantage of the Christmas recess, and go down to the country to see his friends and relations. For his part, not having the same strong reasons to impel him to leave town, he defied any man to prove, that for the several years he had enjoyed the honour of sitting at a public Board, he had, even in summer, neglected to attend his duty. He had done so regularly, and whenever the inquiry was proceeded upon, he was persuaded it would be found that the conduct of the Board in general was such as by no means merited the imputations that had been repeatedly cast on its several members.

Mr. *William Pitt* said, that an assertion of the last gentleman's, who was one of the Lords of the Admiralty, deserved the particular consideration of the House; since it was an assertion which the records of that House would fully and effectually refute. The honourable gentleman had said, that as soon as it was known at the Admiralty what were the papers wanted in this inquiry, which was not till Saturday morning, they set about preparing them. To shew the complete and disgraceful negligence of the Admiralty in this instance, he begged leave to quote, from the Journals of that House, the resolutions of Thursday last. He read those resolutions, fifteen of which were for the production of different papers necessary to the conduct of this inquiry. Here then was a detection of the assertion of the honourable gentleman; for by this it appeared, that the lords of the Admiralty, who attended their duty in Parliament, knew of a great part of the papers that were wanted on Thursday night; and the Board knew officially of them on Friday morning. The House would also see, that the papers called for were not in their nature voluminous, nor such as required much time for preparation. If there were not clerks in the Admiralty, why did they not procure more? But perhaps the principals in the office were not capable, without much time, and great leisure, of arranging, digesting, and preparing this mass of evidence. If so, let them confess it; confess the incapacity of office, and there was no doubt but Parliament would be able to remedy even that evil. The
business

Mr. Wm.
Pitt.

business was plain and simple; the papers were to be copied and laid upon the table. It would not, in his opinion, require a labour of two days to collect, arrange, and digest the whole. And it was of a nature which the Admiralty ought to have foreseen as likely to be called for, and which might have been prepared during the recess. But the learned gentleman who had spoken immediately before the last speaker, had thrown a good deal of light on the business. He was a great Crown lawyer, and therefore what he said must be attended to. He had called it a judicial inquiry. This he denied. A judicial inquiry it was not, nor partaking of the nature of the processes in the Courts below. It was a great solemn inquiry by the House of Commons into one of the high departments of the state; it was an inquiry which the calamities of the empire called for, and which was necessary to the honour, the respect—nay, in his soul, he believed to the existence of the state:—But the learned gentleman went farther, being a judicial inquiry, this Crown lawyer declares, and the House must mark it, the Lords of the Admiralty, in executing the order of the House, are in fact to prepare the charge against themselves, and this naturally requires some time; for, in preparing the charge, they must also contrive to frame the defence. These were the Crown lawyer's very words. In executing the order, they have also to prepare the defence of the First Lord of the Admiralty. Let it therefore be clearly understood, from this high authority, that as the Lords of the Admiralty have to bring forward the charge against themselves, they must necessarily take time, and do it with deliberation, for they must also warp into the charge the defence. He must beg leave to differ with his right honourable friend, in his observation, that gentlemen remarking this conduct of the Admiralty would be fatigued in the pursuit, and give it up in despair. God forbid! No; they would on the contrary view it as a tacit, silent symptom of conscious guilt; they would, if they saw that there was a design to overthrow that by management which they could not resist if met fairly, consider the Admiralty-Board as labouring under the conviction of delinquency; they would say that it carried with it strong symptoms of dark, latent, lurking guilt, which coveted concealment. That all their sounding, proud boasts, challenges, and defiance, they sunk into mean and wretched pretences, hoping to secure themselves for a time from the infamy of that detection which must come upon them at last. Nay, that the

were

were so fond of place, that for the sake of another week's life, they would fall so low as to practise a little manœuvre on the House, and live on the precarious and temporary acquiescence of Parliament. However, upon the whole, he would rejoice if he could be satisfied, that according to the assertion of the learned gentleman, Thursday sevensnight should peremptorily be the day for inquiry; and that ministers would not then strive to put it off to a still more distant day.

Mr. *Gascoyne* rose to explain: he said, the honourable member had misunderstood him; for when he said that the Admiralty did not till Saturday morning know what papers would be wanted, he meant all the papers that should be wanted; and if he had taken the trouble to read the volume of motions contained in the votes of Friday, which he had not read, the House would find that they would be equal in number those contained in the votes of Thursday, which he had read. Mr. Gascoyne.

Mr. *Martin* said, he rose not to take up much of the attention of the House, but merely to say, that he thought there had been time enough to prepare the papers in question, between the period of their being ordered and Thursday next, for which reason the delay, now moved for, appeared to him to be wholly unnecessary. Mr. Martin.

Lord *Mulgrave* said that it was impossible that Lord Sandwich could have been able to prepare for a defence during the recess, because knowing, as he did know, that his works were all in the most complete order, it was impossible that he could have foreseen where the attack would be made upon them. Gentlemen were not at all aware of the great labour that must attend the extracting and digesting the substance of the papers called for: it would be necessary to read over the correspondence or intelligence from abroad, for eight months past; perhaps in some sheets not above a line might be found relating to the object of the inquiry; perhaps in others not a word; but still they must be all read; and read only by the secretary or lords of the Admiralty themselves; because this intelligence, being of a confidential nature, ought not to be intrusted to the ordinary clerks in office: and let gentlemen think what they might to the contrary, he could assure the House, that if all the ordinary business of the Board was to stand still, and all the clerks be employed in copying the extracts, they could not be ready by Thursday next. As to the idea that had been thrown out, that the Board wished for an opportunity, or time to be able to bring forward papers, Lord Mulgrave.

but at the same time withhold the real and substantial intelligence that the House required, all he would say was, that the First Lord of the Admiralty who should dare to do such a thing ought to loose his head : all therefore that he wished for, was time to execute in the most full and ample manner the orders of the House, let the consequence be what it might : the public had a right to know what their servants had done ; and when they should have the most ample documents before them, they then would be able to form a proper judgment of the conduct of those servants ; to inflict punishment if it should be found necessary ; to bestow praise if found to have been deserved. The delay called for was but short ; this was not the month of June, but of February ; and therefore there was no reason to suppose that gentlemen were eager to return to the country : so that it would be to them of very little difference whether the inquiry should take place on Thursday next, or on that day sevensnight. As to the idea of management, which had been thrown out, and for which it had been suggested that the delay was called for, he was so far above such paltry shifts, that he could look down with contempt upon the insinuation.

Col. Barre. Colonel *Barre* hoped, and trusted that the noble Lord meant, by wishing to postpone the inquiry till Thursday sevensnight, to have an opportunity of bringing forward the papers that were called for on Monday next, by which gentlemen would be able to read them before the day of inquiry : for, suspect Lord Sandwich of a manœuvre ! and, that in his own defence ! impossible ! It would be calumny to think of it ! by bringing them forward on that day, the House would be able to get masters of the facts, and then, as the learned gentleman had said, they would go peremptorily into the inquiry on Thursday sevensnight.

The Solicitor General The *Solicitor General* declared, that for his own part, he was so much an enemy to the production of those papers at all, he thought them so dangerous, and so improper to be given to that House, and consequently to all the world, that he wondered how ministers could consent to lay them upon the table. He was an enemy to the inquiry ; for by such an inquiry, and the production of such papers, we destroyed the constitution itself, and lost all the benefits arising from an executive government, as distinct from a legislative. We might as well have all our operations against the enemy brought forward, weighed, discussed, and adopted in that

House, as to produce all the secret communications of government. What was the hazard which we were to run in this business? We were to bring forward all the papers that had been sent to us by those very useful, necessary, and valuable people, who, at the hazard of their lives, and with death always before them, sent us accounts of every thing. It was very true, the substance only was to be given of their correspondence; but might not that be enough to point out who they were, perhaps in the councils of the enemy, or near them, who furnished us with the intelligence? Considering this, he wondered much, that ministers had allowed the papers to be produced at all; but having suffered them, it was certainly their next duty to take care, that in executing the order of the House, they did not suffer one line nor one syllable to pass which should be injurious, or should endanger the country which they were appointed to protect. For this reason time must be given; they had mentioned the time necessary, and he did not see how the House could refuse the motion. He supported Dr. Marriot's idea of the business being judicial, inasmuch as it was ushered into the House with all the force of the most elaborate accusation, in a speech of the honourable mover of near three hours long.

Mr. *Burke* commented on the learned gentleman's speech Mr. *Burke*. with great address. The learned crown lawyer had positively declared, that his Majesty's ministers had in his opinion abandoned their duty and betrayed their country. They had annihilated the executive government entirely. If this was true, and in the learned gentleman's opinion it was, they ought instantly to be impeached, tried, and brought to the block. This being the learned gentleman's opinion, it was no wonder that he should object to the inquiry, for upon this ground the inquiry itself was unconstitutional. The honourable gentleman in very strong colours painted this curious argument, and he then answered others of the assertions that had been made, contending, that the delay moved for was to him the strongest proof of the intention of ministers, and that these intentions were to blast and defeat the inquiry. As to the fear of our spies suffering by any information given to this House, the place, dates and names being suppressed, he could not see any danger arising to any of them from such a production. It was not the nature of secret intelligence to be prolix. Indeed poor must his qualities as a spy be, who does not in a line or two suggest the whole of his business; long dissertations were not their talent, and the

spy who went in such a round-about manner to work would deserve to be hanged by the minister here as well as the minister there.

He had heard that words were but wind, and that they were here more windy than any where else ; he believed the gentleman who had said so, meant to refer to the vote of this House ; that the influence of the Crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished. If the honourable gentleman meant to make their speaker a mere *Æolus*, that *clauso Ventorum carcere regnet*. Whenever this inquiry took place, he would find that “ *Non illi imperium pelagi secum que iridentem.*”

He lamented Mr. Fox's illness, but declared if he continued ill, the inquiry ought to proceed, and even if the country was to suffer such a serious calamity, as his honourable friend's death, it ought to be followed up earnestly and solemnly ; nay, of so much consequence was the inquiry to the public, that no bad use would be made of the skin of his departed friend, (should such be his fate) if like that of John Zisca, it were converted into a drum, and used for the purpose of sounding an alarm to the people of England, in order to teach them, that the only means of saving the state was for that House to be rapid in inquiry into the conduct of the servants of the Crown, and slow in voting away the money of their constituents.

Lord Mulgrave's motion for discharging the order of Thursday last, was then put and agreed to.

His Lordship afterwards moved, “ That the House resolve itself into a Committee of Inquiry, for the purpose of investigating the naval conduct of the war, during the course of the year 1781, on Thursday, the 7th of February.

This was likewise carried.

It was then proposed to go into a Committee of Supply to vote the ordnance estimates ; but Colonel *Barre* opposed the measure on this ground, that it was then too late an hour to enter into a new debate on estimates, which were of such magnitude that they well deserved a whole day's discussion ; they were in size the most enormous, in shape the most questionable of any estimates he had ever seen : they amounted to 1,644,246*l.* equal nearly to 3*s.* 6*d.* in the pound land tax. It was an estimate unprecedented in the English annals. He found that new expences had been incurred by a new species of defence ; for since our navy had ceased to command the seas, we had been obliged to have recourse to land fortifications ;

fortifications ; and when he found where those fortifications were raised, on the eastern coast of the island from the Thames to the island of Shetland inclusively, he could not but consider the unfortunate cause that had rendered all this expence necessary, the war with Holland. If gentlemen meant to act with decency they would not think of going in to the committee that night. Many members not believing it possible that ministers could think of desiring the House to go into the committee that night had gone home, and those who remained were fatigued with the debate which the House had been engaged in. He recommended it therefore to their consideration whether under such circumstances they would think of entering on this enormous estimate now.

Lord North contended for the necessity of voting this service ; it should have been done before the recess, but for a mistake : and it now must be done, as the service would suffer by farther delays. The sum was undoubtedly great ; it was not greater in proportion, however, than former years ; it had increased with the occasions of the state, and was unavoidably enormous this year. He said, the estimate had been a long time upon the table, much longer than usual ; so that gentlemen might have had many opportunities of examining it with care. It was owing to an accidental error in the accounts now upon the table that the estimate was not voted for before the recess according to the usual custom.

Mr. Kenrick spoke a few words, and said, that perhaps the mistake was owing to him. He was a young member of the Board of Ordnance, and was not much acquainted with the forms of Parliament.

Mr. Byng spoke warmly on the shame of going into a committee at so late an hour of the night, which he said looked as if ministry wished to take the House by surprise ; and he therefore moved that the House should adjourn.

Colonel Barre seconded this motion and said, he should be glad, however, if they would agree to go into it that night, to go through as much of it as they could, and adjourn it over to another day. He did not wish to impede the public business. He desired only that gentlemen might fully examine an account which was really shameful in its extravagance. In answer to what Mr. Kenrick had said, he observed, that though he was not acquainted with the honourable gentleman, he was persuaded no part of the blame ought to be attributed to him ; that if it had been found requisite for the present account to be laid before Parliament sooner, there

there were members of this House belonging to that department, whose knowledge of the mode of conducting business would have certainly prevented them from falling into the like error with the honourable gentleman.

Lord North. Lord *North* said, he lamented, as much as any man, the large amount of the estimate now before the House, but the exigencies of our affairs required it; that it was very unaccountable to him, how the honourable Member on the opposite side of the way could say that ministry wished to take gentlemen by surprise, and hurry this business through the House; every candid man must confess the contrary; the accounts had been lying on the table for a week past, the House was well apprized of the purport of them, there was not a member that was not perfectly acquainted with them. If the House was to assent to the honourable gentleman's proposition, the business of the nation would ever remain undone, for on like pretences it might be put off to eternity. It was the constant custom of this House, for all subjects concerning the expenditure of the public money to be discussed on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; and in conformity with this usage (should the matter be now deferred) it could not be debated on Friday next, being a holiday appointed by act of Parliament, no business could be transacted on it. [Here there was a loud laugh from the other side of the House, at a holiday by act of Parliament.] Upon which his Lordship took occasion to observe, that the fact was so far so that it was a day set apart by the legislature for religious observance, let gentlemen of certain principles ridicule it as they might; he then proceeded to observe, that Wednesday was appointed for the striking of a committee for a contested election, the final settlement of which generally took up till past six o'clock, so that one of the principal objections the honourable gentleman had against going into this affair now, the late hour of the day, would hold equally good on Friday, and of course it would be delayed till the Monday after. Gentlemen not aware of the great inconvenience that would arise to government from such a measure, by deranging its plans for the welfare of the nation; the injury the state might suffer in consequence of such a delay would be but poorly atoned for by this boasted maturity of investigation. He therefore wished the matter might then meet the decision of the House.

Mr. Burke. Mr. *Burke* said that he did not intend then speaking, had not the noble Lord given him a cue. He has told the House there

there was not a Member who was not perfectly acquainted with the particulars of the estimates. He would ask his Lordship, had he that knowledge of this matter that he supposed was already so clear to the House? If he had I shall propose a question or two to him. (Upon which Lord North candidly confessed that he had not examined the papers.) From this Mr. Burke concluded, that if his Lordship, who is generally acknowledged to be most competent and accurate in money matters, confessed his not having looked into it, how could he possibly imagine the rest of the House had been masters of the subject he mentioned. In casting his eye over them, he perceived one charge for salt-petre, the enormity of which particularly struck him; the quantity charged for, he said, was sufficient to pickle the atmosphere from hence to the East Indies. He dwelt with a vast deal of humour on it; and then alluded to Lord North's mentioning Friday next being a holiday by Act of Parliament, by observing his Lordship had certainly in his eye at the time, another Act of Parliament for making a holiday; namely, the gun-powder treason plot, which this vast quantity of salt-petre could not have failed to have given rise to. How eager are Ministers to expedite through this House all business relative to the expenditure of money; but when any inquiry is set on foot against them, how tardy, how many obstacles do they throw in the way to stop its progress, or attempts to smother it in its birth! The account was absolutely scandalous. It was one of those things which in mathematics are called incommensurable;—it was impossible to reduce it to any common standard;—it went to a point of extravagance beyond all rule; but it was to be judged of by proportion. So then, because 600,000*l.* was the expence of one year; 800,000*l.* the next;—900,000*l.* the next;—1,100,000*l.* the next; and 1,600,000*l.* the present—it was moderate in proportion; because we have been trying our strength in lifting a bull every day since he was a calf; it is not now to be considered as any uncommon exertion of bodily power. The honourable gentleman having enriched this idea with some beautiful similes and deductions, concluded with declaring that they could not with any regard to their obligations suffer this account to be voted without examination; and he must therefore vote for the motion of adjournment.

General Conway said, that great part of this motion was General Conway on the expenditure of fortifications from the Thames to Shetland;

Shetland; and for his part his mind was not capable to grasp so great an undertaking, without the assistance and support of men of knowledge and ability, to form a proper opinion upon it; and indeed his total despair of obtaining any benefit whatsoever to his country from such an inquiry, prevented his exertions on the occasion; however, as some honourable friends of his entertained hopes of it, he would endeavour at a future day to give them every assistance within the compass of his poor abilities.

Sir George
Yonge

Sir *George Yonge* observed, that it was the duty of every Member who sat in that House, to use his utmost exertions to promote every measure that tended to the benefit of the nation; and, on the other hand, to oppose with his utmost power any matter that seemed hurtful to its welfare. A fear of not succeeding in our good intentions to the State could be no excuse for our negligence in not attempting it.

Lord North.

Lord *North* said, if gentlemen were so very anxious for having this matter deferred to a future day, notwithstanding the immediate necessity there was for its speedily passing the House, yet he should defer the consideration of it (as far as his voice went) till Friday next, provided that no business should be introduced on that day to prevent its meeting with that ample discussion which gentlemen in opposition wished for, or if any debates should arise, which might stop its being proceeded on till a late hour, yet that gentlemen should not object to it on that account, as it was his intent it should be finally determined that day. If gentlemen on the other side of the House understood perfectly what he meant, and would accede to it, he would not push the matter farther, but let it lie over to the time he mentioned.

Colonel
Barre.

After this concession Colonel *Barre* was satisfied, but rather would have part of the ordnance business gone into that night; but Lord North acquainting him, that the design of Administration was to have Exchequer-bills entered upon at that time, he acquiesced; and the motion for adjournment being withdrawn, the House went into a Committee of supply, and voted 1,500,000*l.* to pay off the Exchequer-bills last year.

A Petition from the Mayor, Burgesses, and Commonalty of the City of Bristol, was presented to the House, "complaining of the present situation of affairs at home and abroad; and humbly requesting that honourable House to adopt such measures, as its wisdom might suggest, for enabling his Majesty to put an end to this unnatural, unfortunate, and expensive war in America."

"and

“ and for producing a radical alteration in the management of public affairs, by which alone the evils impending on them, and their posterity can be averted.” The same was ordered to lie on the table; and Sir George Yonge rose and said, the Petition was of so much importance, that he hoped a day would be set apart for taking it into the most serious consideration of the House.

January 29.

After an election ballot, the House went into a committee on the motion of Sir Grey Cooper, to consider of the propriety of granting the prayer of a petition from the merchants of Liverpool, for a new bounty to ships employed in the Greenland fishery.

Sir Grey said, that a bounty of 40s. per ton had been granted by a former act of Parliament, to all ships employed on the Greenland fishery: this was done in the infancy of the fishery for the purpose of encouraging it; but by the same act, this bounty was to be continued only for five years; at the end of which period it was to sink to 30 shillings; and at the expiration of five years more it was to fall to 20s. per ton: the latter period had elapsed by the 6th of January, 1781. Since that time the merchants of Liverpool and Hull had presented a Memorial to the Treasury, stating that the fishery had not so far succeeded, as that it could now be carried on with the reduced bounty, though Parliament had imagined when the act passed that it might. Therefore, in compliance with the request of the merchants, he would move (and did) that the bounty of 40s. per ton on all ships employed in the Greenland whale fishery be continued for a term of years to be limited. The motion passed without opposition.

Sir Joseph Mawbey said, that as the naval inquiry was put off to Thursday sevensnight, he wished to adjourn the call of the House, which stood for next Thursday to that day; when he certainly intended to have it strictly enforced.

Mr Rolle said, that it certainly was the duty of members to attend to the business of Parliament, and a call of the House was a very proper thing, but he wished to see it enforced without partiality; and yet he could not help saying, that members who lived at a great distance from the capital, were obliged to come to town, while many of those who live near town, though absentees from their duty, were not treated as if they had neglected it.

Mr. Byng. Mr. *Byng* was angry at the insinuation, that partiality had been observed in the treatment of defaulters; he understood, that every man in that House had come in under a trust; and as it was the duty of a trustee to attend to his trust, so he never had spared, and never would spare any man, who, without a just cause, should be absent from his service in Parliament. Many letters had been sent to him by several gentlemen, to apologize for them to the House; but he had not done it, and would not do it. He wanted the attendance of the independent gentlemen; and he was determined, not only to do his duty himself; but also, as far as in him lay, to make others do theirs.

Mr Speaker. The *Speaker* said, he had stated to the House, on the day of call, the excuses made to him by several gentlemen who had thought proper to write to him on the subject of their non-attendance: but he had done it almost in the language of their own letters, and without the least partiality.

Sir Joseph Mawbey. Sir *Joseph Mawbey* then moved, that the order for calling over the defaulters on Thursday next be discharged. The motion passed, and the House adjourned.

January 30,

Met and went to church, to hear divine service.

January 31.

Mr. Potter. Mr. *Potter* (member for Colchester) said, that in compliance with the standing order of the House, he had sent down to Colchester, to the friends of Commodore Affleck, who had signed the petition to that House, against his (Mr. *Potter's*) return for their borough, desiring that they would send up the Commodore's qualification before their petition should be referred to a committee. In compliance with his desire, the friends of Mr. Affleck had sent up a paper then on the table, which he desired the clerk might read.

The clerk read it accordingly; and from this paper it appeared, that the petitioners presumed, or hoped, that the House of Commons would not rigidly insist, that Commodore Affleck's qualification should indispensibly be laid before the House, previous to the ballot for a committee to try the merits of their petition; and the foundation of their hopes was, that the Commodore was abroad on public service, and totally ignorant of his having been set up as a candidate for the borough of Colchester; and consequently, that in such a case, it was absolutely impossible for him to lay his qualification

cation before the House within the time specified by order of the House; so the House, in consequence of this impossibility, would not necessarily insist that the qualification should, in this instance, be laid before the House. The paper concluded with a recital of the names of some estates which they knew to be in the possession of Mr. Affleck, in the borough of Colchester: but the whole did not amount to 300l. a year.

Mr. *Potter* observed, when the Clerk had done reading, Mr. Potter. that he was still at a loss how to act; not knowing whether in law, the production of the qualification could be dispensed with; and he wished that the House would instruct him what to do; for in one case he should be obliged to bring three hundred witnesses to attend the committee; while if he was to defend himself against the charge of bribery only, he would not bring up a single witness.

The *Speaker* requested, that the House would recollect, Mr. Speaker. that by Mr. Grenville's act, they had entirely given up to special committees all its judicial powers concerning contested elections; and he hoped the House would see at once the impropriety of interfering, or pronouncing any opinion, that might send the petition in question, or any other, with the smallest degree of a bias to a committee; and as the honourable member had not made any motion on the subject, he trusted the House would remain completely silent on that head; and suffer the petition to go fairly before the committee, the only tribunal competent, by law, to decide ultimately on every difficulty that may attend the contest between the sitting member for Colchester, and the petitioners, electors of that borough.

The House acquiesced in Mr. Speaker's opinion, and called out for the order of the day. There were two orders, one for calling over the House; the other for calling over the defaulters, who were absent on the first day of call.

Mr. *Barrow* moved, that the first should be adjourned to Monday sevensnight; and gave notice at the same time, that he was determined to have it enforced. The motion passed without opposition. Mr. Barrow.

The second order, for calling over the defaulters was next read, and there appeared a desire in many members to divide the House on the motion made by Mr. Byng, that they be now called over; however, the point was given up; and their names were called. Several of the defaulters were ex-

cused in consequence of letters produced by some of their friends, from the parties, in which they complained of indisposition. The Hon. Mr. Montague did not answer to his name; but he was excused, because several members said, they had seen him a few minutes before in the lobby. But Mr. Jolliffe, member for Petersfield, did not experience so much indulgence.

Ld. Surrey. Lord Surrey moved, that William Jolliffe, esquire, be ordered to attend in his place to-morrow; which after some short debate was ordered.

February 1.

A motion was made and agreed to, for a copy of the instructions given to Vice Admiral Darby, previous to his sailing in September last, together with such other orders as might have been sent to him during his cruize. This was one of the motions made by Mr. Fox on a former occasion, and withdrawn at the request of Lord Mulgrave, until his Lordship could have time to search the Admiralty books, to see if they contained any thing improper to be laid before the public.

Ld. Mahon. Lord Mahon moved, that there be laid before the House an account of the expence attending the coining of gold with an alloy of tin.—That a committee be appointed to inquire into the present state of the gold coin; that the committee should have power to examine witnesses, and send for papers, records, &c.—And that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, that he would be pleased to give orders to the officers of the Mint, to make such experiments as the committee should from time to time propose to them. These several motions passed without opposition.

The order of the day for going into a committee of supply was now called for, and the Speaker having left the chair, and Mr. Ord taken that of the committee,

**Mr. Ken-
rick.**

Mr. Kenrick rose to open the Ordnance budget for the current year. He began by apologizing for his want of ability, and his want of experience in stating to the House, for the first time since he had been honoured with a seat at the Board, the particulars of the Ordnance estimates. He then proceeded to state the necessity of voting a supply for that department of the public service; it was not now, he said, the question whether the American war should be prosecuted or relinquished: the question was, whether or not our armies and fleets should fight without powder, for we had voted the
seamen;

seamen; we had voted the army; and it was absolutely necessary that they should have ammunition and artillery. After this preface, he entered into the detail of the estimates, which in the gross amounted to 1,644,242l. From diffidence and timidity at the outset of a business of so much novelty to him, Mr. Kenrick appeared at first so embarrassed, that he spoke very low; so very low indeed, that

Colonel *Barre* found it necessary to request that he would speak louder, or that it would be in vain for him to proceed, as those gentlemen who sat on the other side of the House could scarcely hear a syllable that fell from him: at the same time he apologized to him for addressing him in that manner. He knew that the honourable gentleman was but young in his office, and that being but a young member of that House there was great indulgence to be given; but there were other gentlemen older members of the Board, and who were in the habits of speaking in that House. He was far from thinking that it was any merit in a gentleman to have a loud voice, it was a merit of mere lungs; but in this instance it would certainly facilitate the business if some member of the Board would give the necessary explanations in a louder voice. Col. Barre.

Mr. *Kenrick* again lamented the unfortunate predicament in which he stood, and to which indeed he had been forced by the illness of an old and most valuable member of the Board; but he would do his best, and hoped the committee would excuse the defects of power, and accept his earnest endeavours to satisfy every inquiry. He then proceeded to enumerate the various services, a long and dry detail of expence in fortifications, garrisons, and all the extensive branches of the Ordnance department. Mr. Kenrick.

Colonel *Barre* informed the honourable gentleman, that it was usual for the members of the Board, in giving an account of the estimates, to go first into a general explanation of the causes of the differences that appeared in the estimates, whatever they might be; and having spoken to these points, they sat down to give the Committee an opportunity to ask them questions, which they were, or ought to be prepared to answer. He mentioned this merely for the information of the honourable gentleman; and trusting that he would adopt this mode, he would point out to him what he particularly wished he would explain. There were three prominent features in the estimate, which were more questionable than all the rest of the articles; these were, the charge for salt-petre, the charge for transports, and the charge for fortifications, on which he desired him chiefly to speak. Col. Barre.

Mr.

Mr. Ken-
rick.

Mr. *Kenrick* spoke particularly to the first of these three heads. The committee knew that the East-India company, by their charter, were bound to furnish the public with five hundred tons of saltpetre, at 45*l.* a ton in time of peace, and 53*l.* in time of war. In the estimates before the committee, there were three charges for saltpetre at three different prices; there was one article for a quantity which had been delivered to the Ordnance at the charter-price, as the quantity for which they were bound; but as the necessities of the state required more considerably than the quantity which they were bound to provide, the Board procured from the Company a quantity in the year 1781, amounting, as in the estimates, to 3100 tons. Part of this was charged at 53*l.* the charter-price; part at 73*l.* 10*s.* which was the neat prime cost to the Company itself, including the expence of freight, insurance, and interest; and part of this quantity was charged at 118*l.* 10*s.* which was the last sale-price of the Company. This difference was occasioned by the circumstance that more was wanted than the Company were bound by charter to furnish, as he had said; and having given a quantity in anticipation, up as far as the year 1787, it remained to be settled how the extra charges were to be adjusted. He could only say, that the quantity in the estimate was not all received in 1781, but had been accumulating through the war, and in that year amounted to 3100 tons more than they were bound to furnish. Still wanting more saltpetre they applied to the Company for it; when the answer given was, that they would not give it unless the Board would give the market price; not the price which saltpetre bore at their own sales, but what it bore at the merchant's market at Garraway's coffee-house, where the price at that time was up at 152*l.* per ton. This demand the Board did not think proper to comply with; and it was therefore to pay the Company what was due to them for these 3100 tons that the Board now applied to Parliament.

Mr. Byng.

Mr. *Byng* asked Mr. *Kenrick*, if there was not, beside all this immense quantity of saltpetre, received from the East-India company, another quantity bought lately at a private market?

Mr. Ken-
rick.

Mr. *Kenrick* said it was true. A quantity had been procured from Ostend, and also a small quantity from Portugal. The committee would see that there was a necessity for procuring more saltpetre than the East-India company were bound by charter to furnish: and, in the month of December last,

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the Company having informed the Board that they could not furnish any more, they made a contract with a gentleman who was a member of that House; if it was not irregular he would name him—it was Mr. Townson; they made a contract with him for 400 tons, which was lying at Ostend, at the sum of 118l. a ton, which was the sale price of the East-India Company, and considerably under the merchant's price in the market. In doing this he trusted the Board had consulted the prosperity of the state, in providing by this resource for the exigencies of the service. They had also on the same principle procured a small quantity from a Portuguese ship in the river, at 115l. a ton, by a contract with Mr. Buller.

Mr. *Byng* asked if Mr. Townson was to give no more than 118l. per ton; and if any inquiry had been directed by the Board to be made, of the market price of saltpetre at Ostend, at the time of the contract? Mr. Byng.

Mr. *Kenrick* replied, that there was to be an allowance made to Mr. Townson of about two per cent. and no more, for the freight from Ostend. He very fairly confessed, that no inquiry had been made previous to the contract, of the price of saltpetre at Ostend, and for one very substantial reason, because no one imagined that there was any such commodity in a place where there was no East-India Company: nor did he see, that it would have been politic in the Board to make any inquiry about it at Ostend, if they had even known there had been saltpetre there; because the moment it should be known at Ostend that the Board of Ordnance of England wanted saltpetre, the market would have been that moment raised. The only markets as they believed were the East-India Company here, and the body of the London merchants who bought from the East-India Company. By their prices they regulated the bargain; and the price of the East-India Company at their last sale was 118l. 10s. per ton, the price in the merchants market was about 152l. per ton. They thought therefore that they could not be wrong in making a contract at 118l. per ton with Mr. Townson; to this however must be added the price of freight, which was about 2l. more, so that it might amount to about 120l. per ton. Mr. Kenrick.

Mr. *Byng* said, that in the price which the Board gave for saltpetre in England, the duty paid to Government was included. He wanted to know, if, in the contract with Mr. Townson, the Ostend saltpetre was not to be discharged of the duty? Mr. Byng.

Mr.

Mr. Ken-
rick.

Mr. *Kenrick* could not answer the question, for he really knew nothing of the matter; but he would make an inquiry and satisfy the honourable member, when the report should be brought from the Committee to the House.

Mr. Byng.

Mr. *Byng* urged the question, and said, that he was then to understand that the Board of Ordnance had made no inquiries concerning the price; but without knowing or seeming to care whether it was greater or less in the market of Ostend, they had blindly entered into a contract with a single Director of the East-India Company, and a member of Parliament, for a large quantity of saltpetre, at 2l. per ton more than they gave to the great and valuable Company, which in their necessities had advanced them, in anticipation, not less than the quantity which they were to furnish for six years from hence. This he was given to understand from the honourable gentleman. Now he had pretty good information, that the market price in Ostend when this bargain took place, was not more than 4l. 16s. per cwt. for the very best salt petre, and for an inferior quality was only 3l. 10s. whereas the price paid to Mr. Townson, in this contract, was exactly 6l. per cwt. This was one specimen of the conduct, vigilance, and œconomy of this Board.

Mr. Hufsey

Mr. *Hufsey* exposed the behaviour of the Board in a glaring point of view, with respect to the East-India Company. They have been, for some years past, in the habit of procuring from that Company large quantities of salt petre by anticipation, without paying them for it, and have even demanded to have it at the charter war price of 53l. a ton, which was considerably less than it cost the Company themselves: for the honourable gentleman had confessed that it cost them 73l. 10s. a ton, and yet now they come and make a bargain with a private individual, a member of Parliament, to give him 120l. and they come to Parliament for the money before the salt petre is delivered. This is the manner in which they treat the Company who have been so attentive to the public interest as to advance, by anticipation, salt petre for six years to come. He called upon the members of the Board of Ordnance to say whether they had declared, that they could furnish the Board with no more salt petre? He was given to understand that the case was, they had not been able to procure money from the Board; and had said, that without money, in their present exigency, they could not provide the public with more in advance.

I should

I should be glad to be informed, said the honourable gentleman, how the vast emergency of our state requires, what I cannot not help considering, a very fundamental breach of that excellent law which had been enacted by the providence of our ancestors for the safety of the state. Why was his new-fangled prudence of anticipation entered upon? Our progenitors had, with great wisdom, stipulated with the India Company, that, in consideration of the great emoluments of their charter, they should supply government with 500 tons of saltpetre annually, because they wished to provide against the most common casualty of all states—the event of war; but what has the wisdom of the present day substituted in the stead of this? why truly we have mortgaged the estate handed down to us, and where we ought to bear sway, we are commanded. What, let me ask the Board of Ordnance, what claim have we now upon the East-India Company? Are we not at their discretion? but I shall be answered, no; government has the company in its power. The Board of Ordnance must be supplied with saltpetre, or the next charter shall be pickled with a vengeance: and thus the terrors of power are held over an industrious set of men to rob them of their property. Abandoned effrontery! shameless pilfering!—The honourable gentleman seems to wonder at the phrase—but is it not just? I speak in the language of Parliament, and I repeat that it is just government depends on its power over the Company for a supply at their own price, let that price be ever so inequitable. Shame on such proceedings! It is the conduct neither of honest men nor of politicians.

Mr. Strachy said, the Company were not so very hardly dealt by as the last honourable gentleman seemed to apprehend they were, for that in all their bargains with government, whether under their charter, or otherwise, a minute investigation would shew, that if there was any balance in point of bargain, it was in favour of the East-India Company, and against government. In the first place the former had a monopoly of saltpetre, and surely the least they ought to retribute for so extensive a grant, mixed as it was with monopolies more valuable, which they possessed under their charter, was 500 tons of saltpetre, (not a fifth of the importation of that single article annually) without any emolument to arise from that stipulated quantity; and if an anticipation be required of their annual stipulation—ought it to be urged as a hardship upon them, when they charge not only

ly the charter price, but also the freightage, and other incidental charges, together with interest for the advance of it, in proportion to the anticipation of its quantity, and the length of time encroached on.

In the propositions which they had given in, they had offered to give the public what they had sent in up to 1781, at the charter price; what they had sent in, in advance, from that time up to 1783, which was the period of their old charter, at 73l. 10s. the prime cost; and what they had sent in, in advance, beyond that time, up to 1787, at the sale price of 118l. 10s. but without interest. These were their propositions, and they intimated, that without these we agreed to, they could not furnish more. It was on account of those propositions being made, that the contract was concluded with Mr. Townson.

Gen. Smith *General Smith* lamented that none of the East-India Directors were present to give the Committee an account of the matter. He could only say from his own knowledge, that the Company had suffered much from their friendship to government, in having given so much saltpetre in advance, without having received either a proper price, or any payment; and that on the face of their transactions it evidently appeared, that they had exercised a high hand over the Company, which, in the case of the private contractor, they had not assumed.—He knew that the Company could give the public all that they wanted, provided they met with fair and equal encouragement.

Mr. Kenrick.

Mr. Kenrick mentioned the refraction (to use a technical phrase) which the India Company had on their side in their bargains with government, as a reason why gentlemen should not grant so very freely their commiseration to objects that in fact needed none. And this particular only was at least 6l. per cent. in favour of the East-India Company—a circumstance which at a proper time, when the revision of the East-India affairs was in due order before the House, he trusted, would receive requisite attention and redress. If monopolies were to be at all countenanced, they ought surely to be entirely vested in the government, when the object was the public welfare; and in no one instance surely was this matter so obviously for the advantage of the common safety as in the article of saltpetre then under consideration.

Mr. Burke.

Mr. Burke said, that by a variety of matter in detail, by no means satisfactory, urged by the gentlemen who had spoken in favour of the measures of the Ordnance Board, the particular

particular article now under consideration, had clouds instead of sunshine thrown upon it; he would, therefore, to draw the attention of the House within as small a point of view as possible, and to prevent the vagaries of illusive sophistry, request, that as men of business, some of the gentlemen on the other side of the House, instead of huddling together gross sums, in a very gross way, would be pleased to discriminate, and tell the House, not generally, that some part of the charge for saltpetre was according to the charter price, another part was under the first cost price, and again a third part was under the market price. But that they would tell us specifically what quantity was to be paid for at the first price, and when such quantity was delivered; and so on respecting the rest of the denominated prices. It was by this means only they could come at the prudence or the imprudence of their conduct in bargaining for the public in the present instance.

Mr. *Strachy* rose in reply to Mr. Burke, but his answers Mr. Strachy not appearing perfectly satisfactory to Sir George Savile, he expressed a desire to render still more clear and pointed than had yet been done, the idea of the improvident conduct of the Board of Ordnance, respecting their management of the East-India Company in the article of saltpetre, by requesting to know at what time, after all this hopeful work of anticipation (which had been so much talked of) government would have a right to call on the Company again for the annual quota of 500 tons. This request called up

Lord *North* who began with stating the contract of the East Lord North. India Company to furnish government with 500 tons of saltpetre annually, in consequence of the charter granted to them by the Crown. This contract, said his Lordship, is at the rate of 45*l.* per ton, in the time of peace, and 53*l.* per ton in time of war. Down to the commencement of the French war, government is not charged by the Company, for this article more than according to the charter peace price. From that time to 1781, they are charged the war price. From the year 1781 to the year 1787 inclusive, there are eight years, three of which we may properly call years by anticipation; years for which the Company have now in a whole lump furnished us with what, by their charter, they would be compelled to do only at the rate of 500 tons annually. From 1783 to 1788, the supply they have given us cannot so properly be said to be granted in anticipation of an obligation to be performed, as in a wise assistance to the
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government

government that protect their interests, which government however is answerable to them for an equitable return for this last exertion towards the public service; which, considering the Company in a private capacity, they certainly were not obliged to. Now, upon this fair statement of the case, continued his Lordship, let us see how the account actually stands between the public and the Company. Down to the year 1781, it is evident the Company have done no more than they ought to do. They have fulfilled the terms of their charter. From thence to 1783, they are in anticipation, which may be stiled a sort of favour. Be it so; but do not the public pay for that? the war price under the Company's charter is 53*l.* per ton; and for these last three years which I have now mentioned, they charge 73*l.* per ton; so here is 20*l.* per cent. for anticipation; for the prompt delivery of the whole of a three years supply, instead of a gradual one of a third annually. Surely the East-India Company cannot be said to be pilfered on this head? let us now proceed to account for the last four years of the delivery. Although at first the Company had furnished salt-petre for this period, as they had usually done in the manner that has already gotten the name of anticipation; they have since that period sent in a demand of a different description to the ordnance, and to desire the market-price for the last four years, that is to say, a sum of 118*l.* per ton. And in truth I conceive their claim to have a very equitable foundation; for as their charter will expire in the year 1783, and as they are at present at a loss to know what may be then the terms of a fresh agreement with government; whether such agreement will be for the stipulation of 500 tons as usual or not, I declare I think them right in at least bringing themselves home (as the market phrase is) for what they could now dispose of their commodity to any other bidder. From what I have now advanced, added his Lordship, flatter myself no doubt will remain in the breast of any impartial man who hears me, that the East-India Company have been hardly dealt by, or that the Board of Ordnance have made bargains with less providence than the nature of circumstances would admit of.

Col. Barre.

Colonel Barre observed, that from the several estimates delivered into Parliament, there did not appear charged in any one of them from the year 1776 to 1780, more than for two hundred tons of salt-petre in each year, though by their charter, the Company are obliged to supply Govern-

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ment every year with five hundred tons. An honourable gentleman, it is true, has told you the five hundred tons has been constantly received; but what evidence have you of that? there is no such account in the estimates. If it is really the case, I would ask the honourable gentleman what has become of the remaining three hundred tons? for at present the matter is quite mysterious—we are totally in the dark. So intricate are the estimates now lying on the table, from the general manner in which they are stated, that it is totally impossible to form that judgment requisite in a matter of such serious consequence to the nation. Every article ought to be stated in the clearest and most distinct manner, and every light it was possible to throw on the subject should have been given by office. On the contrary, they have thrown every obstacle in the way of investigation, by rendering the accounts as confused and complicated as it was in the nature of things to admit. For these reasons he should, when the Chair was resumed, move to have the estimates sent back, in order that the several particulars of them might be set forth with precision and clearness, which alone can enable the House to form any just idea of them. He then adverted to the inattention Gentlemen in office have shewn to the interest of the state, the fatal effects of which we experienced in the West Indies in an engagement Admiral Barrington had with the enemy; our powder in that engagement was found to be of very bad quality, and by far inferior to the enemy's. — This was a fact well known, and what the Admiral himself had wrote an account of to Government.

On this Mr. *Kenrick* rose to wipe away those aspersions the honourable gentleman would throw on the Board of Mr. Ken-
 Ordnance; he said there was always a certain standard for rick.
 the powder to be of, before it was allowed to be fit for service, and that it has been the general custom to have it above the standard, so that this being the case, there ought not any blame whatever to be imputed to the Board. He said that powder, though originally the very best, yet after a long voyage and variety of climates, it might be materially injured, for there was no opportunity of airing it on board, as it would be attended with infinite danger to attempt it; and that airing it was the only remedy to prevent those ill effects happening to powder, from the circumstances he had mentioned before. He then replied to the question put to him by the honourable gentleman, if Government
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had received every year the 500 tons the Company were obliged to deliver them, what became of the remaining 300 tons, not charged in the estimates? he said that those estimates before the House, being entirely for the land service, there was nothing charged in them that was not particularly applied to that service, and that therefore the 300 tons, not stated in the account were always applied for the use of the navy, and that was the cause of its not being placed under the present head; and this had been the method in which the business had been transacted for years.

Col. Barre. Colonel *Barre* expressed his astonishment at what the honourable gentleman had said; nor could he in any manner reconcile to great a disproportion between the land and navy service in the article of powder; had we not several sieges carrying on, and vast armies in the field, which must occasion a greater consumption of it than what the navy can possibly do. He said, the honourable gentleman was young in office; yet, from the information he had in several points given the House, he was confident, to have gained the official knowledge he had, he must have exerted himself very much, and on that account was highly praise-worthy. However, to give him a further insight into the arcana of that Board, he would refer him to the resolutions of a Committee of that House; from them he would find that the Ordnance Board had frequently given fifteen, twenty, thirty, nay forty pounds more than the value, for what they have purchased.

Mr. Courtenay. Mr. *Courtenay* said, he heard gentlemen to-night lay much stress on the inattention and mismanagement of the Ordnance Office, to which he could say nothing; but the Master-General, who now presides at that Board, was a man of great experience—had filled many high departments with the strictest honour and integrity—and had, in his present office, shewed the greatest zeal, and most unwearied attention, to every matter that might tend to the welfare of the nation. He knew it was reported, that the powder at Gibraltar was so weak in its quality, it could not reach the enemy's lines, while theirs did the greatest execution. He knew also it was a most malicious and groundless charge, as would appear most clearly, if he might have the liberty of reading the letter he held in his hand, and which was wrote in consequence of directions from the Master-General of the Ordnance to have the matter inquired into. — The gentleman the letter came from was Captain Elliot, a most gallant officer, and

and whose honour and integrity were unquestionable. He then read it, and it stated that the Governor of Gibraltar had made several trials between the Spanish powder, taken out of the ships captured by Admiral Rodney, and the English powder he had in the garrison, and that the latter had been found to be much stronger than the former: this the Governor informed him. However, he added that he himself had been present at two or three experiments, which also agreed with the information he had received from the Governor. This circumstance, he said, ought to make gentlemen more cautious how they wantonly criminated persons in office, without a proper foundation for so doing.

Mr. *Burke* said, he knew when his honourable friend *Mr. Burke* mentioned the affair of the powder in the West-Indies in a parenthesis, the other side of the House would instantly seize it as a fair opportunity to divert the House from the point in question. They wished by any means to get rid of a matter they cannot possibly support. What with their powder and their smock, and their encomiums on officers who may, or may not deserve them, they are endeavouring to draw our attention to matters entirely foreign to the present debate. I must therefore remind the House of a question which was put to Gentlemen in office, to which they have never given any satisfactory answer, I shall now address myself to the noble Lord in the Blue Ribband, and must insist on his giving that information to the House which has been hitherto denied; I mean respecting the three hundred tons of salt-petre, which has never been stated in any of the estimates. This is a particular that must be fully explained, and which explanation I expect from the noble Lord. Here he stopped in expectation of his rising, upon which

Lord *North* immediately got up, and answered the honourable gentleman's question. He said, the 300 tons being applied to the use of the Navy rendered it impossible to be stated in the present account, as all charges made here were entirely for the land service—then say, gentlemen, we have no account whatsoever of this article.—I answer, you have; but it is involved in the naval estimate, for in that there is charged four pounds a man per month, out of which four pounds every month, there are four shillings paid over to the Ordnance Board, the amount of which sum goes to the discharge of the debt incurred by the Navy in that article. His Lordship observed, he stated facts as they appeared to him, but as it was a matter that did not immediately

diately concern him, if he was mistaken in any point, he trusted the gentlemen behind him would set him right.

Mr. Burke. *Mr. Burke* rose again, and in the severest and most pointed language attacked the noble Lord for declaring it was a matter in which he was not immediately concerned, an affair that it was peculiarly his province to have made himself acquainted with, and so have closely examined. What! (says he) is it not the business of the First Lord of the Treasury to see that money matters of such consequence as these are, should be stated fairly and justly, previous to their being brought before the House?—Was it not his business to have inquired into this transaction with the East India Company!—Certainly it was; and I am convinced so, so important a transaction could never be done without his management and consent. In which case, I say, he has cheated the public [here was a loud cry for order] he insisted he was not unparliamentary in what he said, for by making the Company supply Government with salt-petre, at fifty-three pounds a ton, when they could get for the same by public sale one hundred and eighteen pounds a ton, is taking from the Company, at least 60*l.* in every ton, which in the end must fall on the public, they will be the sufferers. The East India Company are at many and very heavy expences, and if they are deprived of the means of supporting them, the public must most sensibly feel the loss, and must certainly afford the Company that protection they have often done. For these reasons, I say it is a tax on the people, and a tax of a most grievous and heavy nature, nor do I think the Directors of the Company are less criminal than the noble Lord, for they have given up the interests of their constituents, and betrayed the trust reposed in them; they should have consulted them before they had assented to a matter pregnant with so much mischief. I look on the East India Company to be one of the chief pillars of the nation; and therefore any thing that might in its consequences affect it, must most certainly affect the empire at large.

Mr. Adams. *Mr. Adams* rose to confirm what Lord North had said in regard to the usage of the navy in the article of powder; he said the war before the Revolution, and ever since that period, it had always been stated by itself, independent of the Ordnance estimates; they had never been united in one account, being entirely distinct matters. He traced the custom and cause of allotting four shillings from the pay of every seaman per month, to the furnishing of naval stores.

General

General *Smith* then read an account, which he said, he had received since he spoke before, wherein was the particulars of the salt-petre furnished by the East India Company to Government. As he thought there appeared a striking difference between this account and that presented by the Board of Ordnance, he thought it necessary to ask the attention of the House, while he read it. After it was read,

Mr. Strachey endeavoured to explain the difference, when Mr. *Hussey* arose, saying, that he thought both the gentlemen wrong. Mr. *Hussey* then read an account which he had in his hand, from whence it appeared there was no real difference between the two accounts, except in form, and they severally stated the treatment which the Company had received from the Board, in being put off from year to year in their accounts, while other creditors were regularly paid.

Mr. *T. Townshend* spoke in general and severe terms, on the enormity of the sum applied for by government in the present estimate, from the Board of Ordnance.

Lord *Geo. Cavendish* asked some pertinent questions, relative to the stating of these estimates. Whether the salt-petre mentioned in them, was not used for both the army and navy? If it were, why was the salt-petre of former years excluded from the estimates of the same Board?

Mr. *Kenrick* made a short reply, which not being satisfactory to the opposite side of the House,

Colonel *Barre* charged them also with shameful misconduct in the care of their debentures, so many of which were now abroad, that they bore an alarming discount. He said, he would also particularly call the attention of the House, (and he would risk himself in doing so, for it was a moment for men to risk themselves,) to a matter still more threatening than any other. There appeared charges in these estimates which now seemed calculated for our protection, but which might be directed as engines against us; the strong holds of tyranny, to lord it over the mangled constitution. To this he would particularly desire the attention of gentlemen. After a good deal of farther question and answer, the gentlemen in opposition declared, that matter had come out which no honest man could possibly get over in his mind, and which called upon them to come to a serious and full investigation of the management of this office, and therefore they moved, that the Chairman should leave the chair and report progress.

This motion was objected to by Lord North with all his strength, and they divided. Against the motion, 113; for the motion, 60. Majority 53.

The Committee then resumed the business, in which Mr. Kenrick stated that part of the estimate which related to transports and fortifications.

Col. Barre. Colonel *Barre* objected to the necessity of sending transports with supplies to Gibraltar, on account of the danger attending a contrary wind driving them into the Mediterranean, where they might be kept a considerable time to our imminent danger. He then adverted to the fortifications, particularly those from the Thames to Shetland. The necessity, he said, was occasioned by our creating a war with our best friends, the Dutch. In former wars, the enemy never dared to attempt that part of the empire. Now that place which furnished the metropolis and its vicinity with fuel might be attacked, and successfully, by the enemy. This was an object of attention. For it had been surprised, and great damage had been done to several of the mines, so that there was a necessity he allowed for even a fortification there. He was sorry for it. It was the only war in which they were found indispensable. Our floating fortifications were formerly our strength. But since these fortifications were now become so necessary, he begged that gentleman in that office would be circumspect in their reparation and establishment. He did not mean to fetter the hands of necessity. But he was afraid those guns which now we raised on towers, might at a future time be pointed against ourselves.

The question was then called for, and the supplies, estimated by the Board of Ordinance, were granted.

Mr Burke. Mr. *Burke* then moved, that the House resolve, "That a debt had been incurred by the Board of Ordinance on the East-India Company, without any specification in their estimate, that tended to impose on the credulity of that House." This resolution was rejected.

The House broke up at eleven o'clock, and adjourned to Monday.

February 4.

Sir Grey
Cooper

Sir *Grey Cooper* moved, that the House should resolve itself into a committee, to take into consideration the propriety of explaining and amending two acts of parliament, that had passed in the 20th and 21st years of his present Majesty's

ty's reign ; the amendment he wanted to make, was merely to remove a doubt that had been lately started, relative to an expression in these acts ; the purport of these acts, was to allow the captors of East-India goods, taken from the enemy, to sell the same in England, they paying the usual duties. The doubt that had arisen in the construction of these acts, was, whether tea, which came from China, was to be reckoned among India goods, or not : in his own mind, he did not entertain a doubt upon the subject ; but as there were many who did, he wished to have it explained away by a new act, which should declare that tea was, in the intention of the legislature, included under the general expression of India goods. The motion passed ; and in a committee, the proposition was agreed to.

Lord *Mulgrave* produced several returns to orders of the Lord *Mulgrave*. House, in consequence of Mr. Fox's various motions, preparatory to the inquiry into the administration of naval affairs : but he said, there were two orders to which the Admiralty had delayed to make returns ; because the motions on which these orders had been made were so worded, that they admitted of two interpretations ; according to one of which, the Admiralty had not the least objection to make out the returns ; but, according to the other interpretation, they had very strong objections, which they would, if necessary, be most willing to submit to the judgement of the House. One of these orders related to the information that had been received of the state of the Dutch force in the Texel : this might be understood two ways— the information relative to that force, previous to the declaration of war with Holland ; and the state of it at present. If the motion was to be confined to the former meaning, no objection lay to a compliance with the order. If, on the other hand, it took in the present state of the force in the Texel, there was a very strong objection to it, because it might affect the future operations of our fleets. The Admiralty were ready to comply with the wishes of the honourable Member, who had made the several motions, in every thing that had only a retrospective view ; but they could not with any regard to the duties of the office, consent to lay before the House intelligence of the present state and condition of the service, or lay open the designs of the state.

Another order for the instructions given to Sir Charles Hardy, to prevent the junction between the fleets of France

and Spain, was liable to as strong an objection : for at the time to which the motion on which the order of the House had been made, particularly pointed, the Spanish rescript had not been delivered in ; and therefore he submitted to the House, how far it would be prudent or politic to insist on a compliance with their order. He did not want to delay inquiry, or to withhold any thing that could be deemed necessary to it ; he only desired to consult the House, being at the same time ready to obey whatever order they, in their prudence, should make.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox said, he would not press the business on the Admiralty, or insist on a compliance with the order of the House ; but at the same time he desired he might be understood not at all to give way to the objections made by the noble Lord : he did not approve of them ; and in his mind they ought not to be deemed of any weight : he readily passed over whatever related to the Texel ; but he must condemn, in the strongest terms, the conduct of administration in having omitted to give orders to Sir Charles Hardy, to prevent a junction between the French and Spanish fleets : he took it for granted, that no orders whatsoever had been given on that head to Sir Charles ; because nothing even like an attempt to prevent a junction, was made by that officer ; and as he had a right to suppose he would have been disgraced, if he had disobeyed his orders, so on the other hand, he had as good a right to presume that as he was not disgraced, so he had not disobeyed orders : and, consequently that he had not received any, because he never attempted to execute any to prevent a junction. He admitted that at the time to which he alluded, the Spanish rescript had not been delivered ; but he insisted that this circumstance was no excuse to the First Lord of the Admiralty, for having omitted to send orders to our Admiral, to make every effort to prevent the junction : in his idea, if Spain and England had been apparently, on the very best terms, still it would be repugnant to every principle of sound policy in the latter, ever to suffer the former to join her fleets with those of France, if the junction could by any means be prevented.

He threw out these observations merely to assert his right to combat the objections made by the noble Lord, if the inquiry should be carried farther back than the year 1781, and he hoped it would : however, as at present, it was chiefly confined to that year ; and as the period alluded to by the motion,

tion, for a copy of the instructions given to Sir Charles Hardy, was prior to that year, he was willing to give up the point to the Admiralty, for which the noble Lord appeared to contend; and therefore, he would not insist on a return to the two orders made by the House for those instructions, and the state of the Dutch force in the Texel.

Mr. *Burke* said that he held in his hand a petition from Mr. *Mr. Burke.* Hohen, the Jew, whose misfortunes he described in a former debate; this was the Jew, whose coat was ripped; and from the lining of which, the small sum of money was taken, which he had endeavoured to secrete, when he and the other people of his nation were obliged to quit St. Eustatius, by order of Sir George Rodney and General Vaughan. After some little conversation, Mr. Burke moved for leave to bring up the petition, which he obtained; and the petition was therefore brought up and read. It stated that he was of the Hebrew nation, a native of Amsterdam; and that he had been a resident of St. Eustatius, for twenty-five years; that when that island had submitted to his Majesty's government, he and all the others of his nation had been forced to quit the island, though no crime whatsoever had been proved against them; nay, though not so much as a charge of a crime had been made, unless it was, that after he had received orders to depart, it had been discovered that he had sewed up a few shillings of his own money, in the lining of his coat; that afterwards he had been permitted to return to St. Eustatius, but it was only to see the whole of his stock in trade sold for one third of its value, and appropriated to the use of his Britannic Majesty; that he had got out of all his property one small bag of money, which was in his bureau, when he was banished from the island; and afterwards he obtained leave to come over to England, where he could expect redress only from that House: because if he should be referred for his remedy to the courts of law, it would be totally out of his power to avail himself of that remedy; and, stripped of his whole fortune, to contend with Sir George Rodney and General Vaughan, who by the very means that had put it out of his power to see lawyers, had secured to themselves the means of withholding from him that property which he had been his whole life in acquiring. He therefore prayed for such relief as the House, in their wisdom should think proper to grant him.

The *Secretary at War* wished to know what was the specific *Secretary* object the honourable member had in view? If he was defini- *War.*

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rous to move for a grant of public money for the petitioner; he would recollect to what consequences such a measure might lead; for if it should once go forth into the world, that all those who might have causes of complaint against officers, should obtain pecuniary compensation from that House, there would be no end of applications.

Mr. Burke. Mr. *Burke* said he was desirous only that the petition should go to a committee, in order to determine whether the allegations it contained were founded in truth, or not: If it should be discovered that they were true, then undoubtedly he would wish to have some compensation to the unfortunate man. The right honourable gentleman's objection to the present mode of application was truly curious. If, says he, you were to redress all those who have cause of complaint against our officers, there will be no end to applications of this nature: or in other words so many are the flagrant acts of oppression committed by our officers, that we should not find time to attend to all the applications for redress: a fine compliment to our commanders truly! How different was the conduct of the French commanders. The Marquis de Bouille by his spirit and activity had wrested from us many of our possessions; but he treated the conquered with tenderness and humanity: the fortune of war might wrest victory from us, without disgracing us; or robbing us of our virtues, which was beyond the reach of fortune: but our commanders had robbed us of that which fortune could not have taken from us, they had robbed us of character; they had committed acts which had robbed the nation of that high name which it was accustomed to bear in Europe, for its liberality and justice; in arms the Marquis de Bouille had already stripped us of some of our islands; it was to be feared that by his justice, his moderation, and his clemency, he would strip us of the few that remained: it was no disgrace to this country, that St. Eustatius, with a garrison of seven hundred men, should have been surprised by three hundred: such things had often happened in war, and would undoubtedly happen again; but the honour and reputation of a country were not affected by such an event: at St. Eustatius the commander might have been negligent, and ought perhaps to be punished for his negligence; but his negligence did not dishonour the nation; it was when private property was ransacked, when innocent people were stripped of all they were worth, and banished from the island, that such acts of barbarity

rity would remain stains upon the national honour, if the nation did not, by some public declaration, express its abhorrence of them ; what a disgraceful contrast did the capture and re-capture of St. Eustatius hold forth to the world ? Two British commanders plunder every unfortunate inhabitant of the island. The Marquis de Bouille restores, as far as he can, to every man his property. The British officers strip the Dutch governor, and plunder even his lady, breaking open her cabinet, and taking from her every thing valuable found in it ; and at the same time endeavour to justify or palliate the act, by blasting her character, saying that she was an usurer ; the French commander, on the other hand, restored, even to the negligent English governor all the property he claimed as his own ; and did not insist on any other voucher, than his bare word. Here the character of England he said was at stake ; and he implored gentlemen to have pity on their country, though they should have none on the poor Jew.

If in the sitting of the committee, it should be discovered that the allegations in the petition were true, ministers might make compensation to Mr. Hohen, without giving him any of the public money ; they might give him a slice of the loan ; for it had been often said, that the profits made on a loan, were not from the public money, or they might set him *en croupe* of some fat contractor : these were means of redressing the grievances of which he complained, without any application to the public treasury.

The honourable gentleman spoke for a considerable time in a vein of wit and humour ; speaking of the fast, and the unfortunate Jew, who on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell into the hands of robbers ; he recommended the example of the good Samaritan ; and thought that to follow it, would be the best way to observe the fast ; though the right honourable Member seemed to be of opinion, that if the House were to relieve all the unfortunate who should fall into the hands of robbers in power, the nation would soon be exhausted. He was ashamed that the public treasury should have been contaminated with the plunder of St. Eustatius ; or that any part of it should have been confiscated for the King's use : the Jews would not have done so, they would have nothing to do with the thirty pieces of money brought to their Sanhedrim by Judas Iscariot. He concluded by moving that the petition be referred to a committee.

The

Secretary at
War.

The *Secretary at War* said, that whenever people had a mind to be charitable they should take care to make free only with their own money: but when they were going to vote away the money of their constituents, they should be careful upon what grounds they did it; for in that case there was neither charity nor generosity; because the money to be granted by gentlemen was not their own. This was the only reason he had for rising on the present occasion, but he had not a wish to oppose the motion for sending the petition to a committee.

It was suggested by Mr. Byng, that as Mr. Hohen was poor, the House might, if it be found that he should have redress in law, order the attorney and solicitor-general to carry on his suit for him gratis.

Lord Mahon

Lord *Mahon* was for the petition being brought up, and informed the House, that the petitioner had been so ill-treated, that the attorney-general should be ordered to prosecute, at the king's expence, the plunderers who had so shamefully robbed a respectable merchant, and put it out of his power of doing himself justice. The motion then passed.

Lord Beau-
champ.

Lord *Beauchamp* claimed attention to what he was going to say, more on account of the novelty and importance of the business he was about to explain to them, than from any personal consideration to him. He had in his hand, he said, a petition very unlike those which had been formerly hawked about the counties and cities; and to which, in order to swell the list, names were subscribed of persons who had never existed. The petition he was going to present was signed by great numbers indeed of men, respectable in their different lines and occupations in life, who had, unsolicited, set their hands to it. He complained then of the various hardships to which shopkeepers are subjected, by being kept long out of their money, and finding it very difficult to prove their debts in courts of law. It was the common rule with all retail dealers, to get three months credit from the wholesale dealer; and if, at the end of that time, they could not pay, they gave notes bearing interest, until they should be able to discharge the principal: now as they were, in many cases, for years out of their money, it was a hardship, that they should be obliged to pay interest themselves for this money, without being able to exact any for it: the consequence was, though the shopkeepers did not wish to have it known, that they

they made their good customers pay for those who did not pay at all. He would not pretend, he said, in so complicated a matter to move any thing specific to the House; he would therefore only move, that the petition should lie upon the table, hoping that gentlemen more conversant in trade than he was, would turn their thoughts to the subject, and devise some means to grant such relief to the petitioners, as in their case might to them appear proper and expedient.

Mr. Fox rose to second the motion; he vouched for the respectability of the signatures to the petition; many of the persons whose names were signed to it, he had the honour to represent; but while he maintained the respectability of this petition, he could not help speaking as respectfully of those other petitions, of which the noble Lord had spoken so harshly. He concurred with the noble Lord in his wishes, that some gentlemen conversant in trade would take up the business, and bring it before the House in a proper form. The petition was first read, and then ordered to lie upon the table.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Powney rose to make a motion for leave to bring in a bill to prevent the vexatious removal of paupers.

Mr Powney

Sir George Yonge said he was not well inclined to the motion; he objected to the word vexatious; and said that such a bill as the honourable member was going to move for, would spread an alarm through the kingdom: at all events, he hoped he would withdraw it for the present, as there was some other business of consequence to come before the House.

Sir George Yonge.

Mr. Powney grew warm at the idea of his bill spreading an alarm through the kingdom; he wished that no other alarms were to spread through the kingdom but such as should originate from him; he asked if Jews and Americans were to be continually the objects of our pity, while our own poor were passed over unnoticed? their situation had always struck him as well worthy the attention of the legislature; and he had often declared, that if he should ever be honoured with a seat in Parliament, he should bring their situation before the House. A circumstance had happened but yesterday, which had furnished him with a fresh proof of the necessity of some such bill as he wished to propose: an overseer of the poor had come to him, to make an order to remove two paupers, a man and his wife: he asked the overseer for what

Mr Powney

reason? "Why, Sir, replied he, because as they live much better in our parish than they do any where else, we shall soon be over-run with paupers." Mr. Powney told him that because the poor lived well there, that was a reason why he should not remove the man and his wife. As to the word vexatious, though it was very clear it was properly put into the motion, if there was nothing else but the above case to prove it, yet he was ready to give it up; he was not an enemy to alterations whenever they should appear necessary, or to give way to the temper of the times; and therefore as gentlemen wished to go immediately into the business of the day, he would for the present withhold his motion: but he could not help observing that he was sorry to find that in the House of Commons, and still more particularly in the House of Lords, the old doctrine prevailed too strongly—" *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari.*" But prudence and sound policy should make us on the contrary say;—" *Tempora mutantur, et nos mutemur.*"

On the order of the day being called for receiving the report of the Committee of Supply,

Sir P. J.
Clerke.

Sir P. J. Clerke arose, and objected to its being received, as there were three particular heads in the ordnance estimate, which had not been fairly investigated; those he said were the article of salt-petre, the transport service, and the sum for fortifications; the first of those articles appeared clearly to have a fraud in it, and the others had not been explained.

Mr. Hufsey

Mr. Hufsey stated to the House, that the usual method of paying the tradesmen belonging to the ordnance office, was by debentures; that these debentures, instead of bearing a premium, were in such disrepute, that they were frequently sold from 25 to 28 per cent. discount, which undoubtedly must be a great loss to the trader, and be a means of his having an enormous price for his contract to enable him to give such credit. Some accounts he said, were paid in part by imprest-bills, which bear only a discount of 3 per cent. and the rest by debentures, therefore, he wished to know whether the bills that were settled in that manner, were promiscuous ones, or whether they were only done for favourites.

Mr. Ken-

Mr. Kenrick informed the honourable member, that the bills were all paid alike, according to their several dates, without any favour or affection; that respecting the business of the contract for the salt-petre, the ordnance had incurred a debt

a debt to the India Company; and had been refused any more salt-petre, unless the former debt was paid, which it was not in their power to do; therefore they had applied elsewhere, and had accepted of Mr. Townson's proposals.

Mr. *J. Townshend* requested leave to say a few words relative to the contract made by the Board of ordnance with Mr. Townson; he had authority, he said, to aver, that the contract had been made wholly without the knowledge of the master-general of the ordnance; nay that as soon as it had come to that noble Lord's ears, that a contract was in agitation, which would not bear the closest inspection, he immediately sent directions to the Board to break off the treaty; but it was too late, the business had been already completed. He trusted that the House would not think it necessary for him to apologize for having spoken on the subject; it was natural for him to wish to rescue from obliquity the name of a noble Lord, to whom he was so nearly related (his father, Lord Townshend) a man who had served his country with as clean hands, and as strict integrity, as any man in the nation.

Mr. John
Townshend

Mr. *Kenrick* acknowledged, that the contract had been made without the knowledge of the master-general, for that the Board had been given to understand that secrecy was necessary on the subject, as the market would undoubtedly have been raised upon them, if it should have been known in Ostend that the Board of ordnance wanted salt-petre. The honourable member with whom they had made the contract, had pointed out to them the necessity for secrecy: and as to the price, they had been guided in it by the prices of the India sales, and of the market at Garraway's.

Mr. Ken-
rick.

Mr. *Townson* said, that his character as a merchant, stood high and unimpeached; that from the correspondence which he had as a merchant, he had learned that there was a great quantity of salt-petre at Ostend, and that it was a commodity that was growing scarce throughout Europe: from this he concluded that the French, or some of our other enemies, would soon, perhaps, buy it up. To deprive them of such a resource, and procure it to his country, he thought a double service: he had rendered that double service to it; and if, in so doing, he had availed himself of the character of a merchant, to derive some personal advantage to himself, he did not deem himself the less intitled to the thanks of his country. It was not to any ministerial favour or influence he owed his contract,

Mr. Town-
son.

Mr. Courtenay.

Mr. *Courtenay* in vindication of Lord Townshend said, that the noble Lord had sent to Russia, to Sweden, and to Denmark, to learn the state of the saltpetre markets in these countries: in Copenhagen he found that it sold from 2*l.* 15*s.* to 3*l.* 15*s.* per hundred; that having this knowledge, and hearing of the improvident contract which he understood the Board of Ordnance were going to make, he sent them orders, as master-general, to stop short; and break off the treaty: Mr. Courtenay himself had been the messenger on the occasion; but when he explained himself, they appeared surprised; and informed him that the contract had been signed three days before. With respect to the merit which the last speaker assumed to himself from having found out this saltpetre at Ostend; and the necessity which he had insinuated that there was of acting with secrecy and caution, he could not see ground either for this assumed merit, or for secrecy; for it was known that the Ostend saltpetre had been frequently advertised in the London newspapers. If the India Company asked 118*l.* per ton for their saltpetre, they always allowed six and a half per cent for prompt payment: now the honourable member, in his contract, was to have ready money, or prompt payment; but not a farthing was he to pay discount. The Company paid also seven and a half per cent. duty to the Crown; the honourable member, he understood, was to have his saltpetre pass duty-free: these two articles together, made 14 per cent in his favour; and 14 per cent might not be deemed too great profit for a merchant; but when he got 30, 40, nay 50 per cent. the public had a right to call the bargain improvident; and such was the profit on the contract; for the honourable member was to have more than 6*l.* per ton for that which sold from between 3*l.* 15*s.* to 4*l.* 15*s.* per ton. At the same time he must beg leave to say, that he fully exculpated, in his own mind, the Board of Ordnance, from the guilt of making an indiscreet and criminal contract. He believed that they made it in the firm reliance, that as Mr Townson was a member of Parliament, and a Director of the East India Company, he must be a man of honour.

Mr. Gregory

Mr. *Gregory* declared the India Company did not refuse to let the Ordnance have any more saltpetre without paying for what was then owing; all they refused was to trust for any more, being themselves in want of cash. The Company had, he said, at the time the contract was made with Mr.

Mr. Townson, 1212 tons of saltpetre in their warehouses, which they would have sold to the Ordnance for ready money, without the old debt being paid; and as a proof of their regard for the Ordnance, they had, out of that 1212 tons, reserved 700 tons for their use, supposing they might want it, and had absolutely deposited it in the King's warehouse under the White Tower; that on the 25th of January last the Company had sold 275 tons, at 110l. per ton, which was much less than the price agreed to be paid to Mr. Townson, besides making the usual discount of 6l. 10s. per ton, and paying 7l. 10s. for duty.

Mr. *Strachy* defended the Ordnance Board from any guilt in the contract, and declared, they knew nothing of Mr. Townson; neither did he, or Mr. Kenrick, ever see Mr. Townson until they voted for him at the India House. Mr. Strachy

Mr. *T. Townshend* rose, and after paying many compliments to the Master General of the Ordnance, for his upright conduct in office, reprobated in the most severe terms the saltpetre contract; and declared his utter aversion to pass the Ordnance estimates while there was such a glaring sum put down to the use of fortifications, without a single line of their utility being urged or defended by any one military or professional man. Mr. Townshend.

Lord *North* said he was a total stranger to the contract so reprobated, and he was free to own, by the present appearance it was enormous: with respect to Mr. Townson, he never, until after the contract was over, knew he had it. The only reason he supposed for Mr. Townson's having the contract was, he being the only person that made an offer, was the person that was accepted. With respect to the article in the estimate of fortifications, they were in his opinion highly necessary; they were a safety to our shipping, and added strength to the navy, as fewer ships were wanted to protect our coasts. He gave that only as his own opinion, confessing himself not sufficiently master of the subject, it being entirely out of his province. It was now much later than usual, he said, in the sessions for the supply to be granted, therefore any impediment to it would be doing a material injury to the service. He proposed to leave out the article of saltpetre procured from Mr. Townson, amounting to 149,000l. and vote the remainder, as money was much wanted, Ld North.

Mr.

Mr. Byng.

Mr. Byng was exceedingly animated respecting the shameful contracts and abuse of public money; the constituents he had the honour of representing, he said, from their situation, had an opportunity of seeing and knowing more what was passing than most others, and they had instructed him to declare, that so far from there being a necessity to keep the contract respecting saltpetre a secret, the sale at Ostend was publicly advertised in the London newspapers. He was credibly informed the chief contract for Ordnance transports lay with some of the clerks of the same Board; and he desired to know from the gentlemen in office whether the contract for Ordnance transports was ever advertised. He never was so thoroughly convinced of the necessity of Sir P. J. Clerke's motion, to exclude contractors from parliament, as now.

Mr. Kenrick.

Mr. Kenrick said, he could not inform the honourable member whether the Ordnance transport contracts were advertised or not; but one reason for the expence being great on that head, was owing to our allowing seven men to every 100 ton of shipping, where merchants only had five men and a boy; the reason for our having that difference was, all our transports being armed ships, and requiring a larger share of hands to work the guns, and navigate the vessels, than those that were not armed.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox arose, saying, he was astonished to hear the noble Lord in the blue ribbon deny any knowledge of Mr. Townson. Did not he know he was member for the place where his Lordship's conduct was so recorded? (Milborne-Port). Did not his Lordship know he was an India Director? Did he not know he was a merchant, and ready at his nod on all occasions? That his Lordship had no hand in making the contract he was ready to confess; for if he had, he would have made it at the highest price, namely 153l. per ton; the same as he did the contract for rum, where he suffered himself to be cheated, and then, in return, cheated the public. That contract too was made with a perfect stranger to his Lordship; and he supposed the Board of Ordnance dealt with Mr. Townson for the same reason that the two honourable members voted for him at the India-house, "because they never saw him before." Could there be a plainer proof of Mr. Townson being the creature of the minister, than the people of the Ordnance being compelled to vote for him? Certainly not. There never could be any
his

fair representation of the people in that House, while such a nest of contractors and loan-jobbers were suffered to sit there. It was impossible for the minister to speak to a member as a contractor; and it was equally impossible for a contractor to speak in that House as a member; by that means the public were shamefully robbed, the minister being obliged to let the contractors have a good bargain; which, per contra, was a bad bargain for the nation. He continued a long chain of similies, much to the purpose, and was against acceding to the report; saying, as one fraud had been detected, it led him to suspect the whole. The noble Lord had offered to give up the saltpetre; why did he not do that of his own accord, and not give the House the trouble to goad him to it? But his reasons for giving up the saltpetre were, that they might pass by, without any further inspection, the other two glaring heads. The urging the lateness of the season was no argument for him: why was it not brought on sooner?

Sir H. Houghton complained of there being a shameful Sir H. Houghton.
abuse of the public money in building fortifications at Liverpool; which he understood, from people conversant in military affairs, were not skilfully laid out.

Mr. Gascoyne, sen. was surpris'd at the assertion; because Mr. Gas.
it was not at all warranted in fact: the honourable Baronet, Gascoyne,
he was convinced, was unintentionally wrong: the fact was, that some privateers having made an attempt upon Liverpool, the Board of Ordnance had sent down some pieces of cannon. The Corporation were desirous to have some fortrefs raised for the defence of the town, and offered to build one at their own expence upon any plan that the Board should give them: they accordingly did so; they gave the ground to the King, and at the expence of 12,000 l. of their own money, built one of the finest stone block-houses in England. It had been since reviewed by Major-General Fawcett, who pronounced it to be a very complete piece of work; but upon inspecting some grounds near it, it was judged necessary to enclose it with a wall, which was to cost 500 l. that sum was in the estimates; but that was the only sum that the public had been called upon for that fortification.

Colonel Barre informed the House, that the Ordnance Col. Barre.
estimates for the present year were as much as the whole of queen Anne's war; that fortifications at particular places
were

were necessary, no man could deny; but he was confident the places selected out, and where large sums were expended, were ill chosen, and particularly the works carrying on at Chatham, with in twenty-nine miles of the capital, alarmed him, as they could not be finished to do any service this war, and might be of a dangerous consequence in either the hands of an enemy, or any one that would wish to be arbitrary. If the noble Lord complained that the public business must not be retarded for want of money, he suggested the plan of granting a vote of credit for one million on account, and recommitting the report for further consideration. He complained of the badness of our powder, and produced a letter from Barbadoes of a trial of the powder taken out of seven British ships, with that taken out of seven Spanish ones, when the balance was in favour of our enemy at least four to three.

Mr. Courtenay.

Mr. *Courtenay* defended the Ordnance Office, respecting the powder; laid the blame on the gunners not taking a proper elevation, nor keeping the powder properly shifted and aired. He concluded about the expence of fortification, by desiring every person, who was anxious to destroy them, to do as Serjeant Kite talked of, to eat up a ravelin for breakfast, and afterwards pick their teeth with a pallisade.

Gen. Conway.

General *Conway* gave his opinion, that fortifications were necessary to protect our dock-yards, but that he thought that that there were some ill chosen, and ill conducted: he was for adopting Colonel Barre's proposition to grant one million for the present, and make a farther inquiry.

Mr William Adam.

Mr. *W. Adam* defended the ordnance with respect to the enormous sum for transports, by shewing that formerly the navy board used to do that business, which being now added to the ordnance, exceedingly swelled the account.

Col. Ross.

Colonel *Ross* passed an eulogium on the merit of general Elliot at Gibraltar; but said nothing to the matter in question.

Sir William Dolben.

Sir *William Dolben* was for accepting Colonel Barre's proposition, as was

Sir George Yonge

Sir *George Yonge*, who gave several instances of the abuse of the public money to his knowledge.

At length the question being called for, the gallery was cleared, and the House divided; for receiving the report 122; for re-committing it, 92.

The report was then received.

The following are authentic copies of the important papers laid upon the table of the House in consequence of the motions of Mr. Fox, and the orders of the House, containing the information necessary to the proposed enquiry into the management of our Naval Affairs, and particularly in the Year 1781.

Extracts of instructions from the Lords of the Admiralty to Admiral Geary, dated the 27th of May, 1780.

WHEREAS the intelligence has been received, that the squadron of French ships of war, named in the margin, are sitting out at Toulon with the greatest expedition, to proceed under the command of Count D'Estaing to Cadiz, in order to join five other French ships of the line, whose names are also in the margin, and then, in conjunction with a squadron of Spanish ships of war, repair to Brest to join the squadron which is preparing at that port for the sea: and whereas it is of the utmost importance to prevent a junction of the above-mentioned combined squadrons from Cadiz, with the squadron at Brest; you are therefore, in pursuance of his Majesty's pleasure, signified to us by the Earl of Hillsborough, in his letter of the instant (as twenty-four of the line of battle ships which we have put under your command, are in readiness for the sea) hereby required and directed, with the first opportunity of wind and weather, to proceed to sea with them, and such frigates, fireships, and other vessels as shall also be in readiness, and cruize upon such station as you shall judge most proper for intercepting the said squadrons of the enemy from Cadiz, or the squadron from Brest, if they shall attempt to join each other, and use your utmost endeavours to take or destroy them; making it your chief purpose (if possible) to engage them separately.

110 Le Terrible
74 Le Zélé
74 Le Marseillois
64 Le Hardi
64 Le Lion
50 Le Sagittaire
50 L'Experiment
74 Le Glorieux
74 La Bourgogne
74 Le Zodiacque
74 Le Scipion
74 Le Heros

You are to leave orders for the rest of the ships and vessels of the squadron put under your command to follow you, jointly or separately, from time to time, as they are ready, to your cruising station, according to such rendezvous as you shall leave with them.

And whereas the safety of the kingdoms of Great-Britain and Ireland, and the trade of his Majesty's subjects must always be considered as very important objects of your attention, you will be careful to give them every protection that is consistent with the great purpose of preventing the junction of the enemy's fleets, and engaging them separately.

Copy of a letter from Mr. Stephens to Admiral Geary.

Admiralty Office, 27th July, 1780.

Sir,

I have it in command from my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, to send you in the enclosed four papers, extracts of such intelligence as their Lordships have received of the equipment of the French and Spanish squadrons in the ports of Brest and Cadiz. You will therein perceive, how much they have at heart the junction of those squadrons, and the means they are taking to effect it; by sending ships singly from Brest, and other ports in the Bay, to Cadiz. It is of the utmost importance, and it is the great object of your instructions, to prevent, if possible, such junction of the enemy's fleets; and I am therefore commanded by their Lordships

convey to you their most earnest wishes, that you will keep the sea with the fleet you command as long as you possibly can, as the most effectual means of frustrating the designs of the enemy. And as there is no longer any probability of invasion, or danger from the Brest fleet to our trade in the Channel, their Lordships think you need not confine yourself to your former station between Ushant and Scilly, but extend it more to the southward; but this, however, is left to your own direction and judgment.

I send this by the True Briton cutter, whose lieutenant is directed to follow your orders for his farther proceedings; and I shall very soon send a duplicate of it by the Pheasant cutter, whose lieutenant will have the like directions.

I am with great regard,

Sir,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

Philip Stephens

Admiral Geary—at sea.

Copy of a letter from Mr. Stephens to Admiral Geary.

Admiralty-Office, 2d August, 1780.

Sir,

I have the honour to send you herewith extracts of such further intelligence respecting the French and Spanish squadrons, as hath been received by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, since my letter to you of the 27th ultimo; and as you will thereby see, that there is great probability the enemy will soon attempt the junction of their fleets, I have it in command from their Lordships, to recommend it to you in the strongest manner, not to come into port with your fleet, except in case of necessity; and to the end that you may be the better enabled to keep the sea, I am further commanded to acquaint you, that the Victualling Board are directed to cause large quantities of beer and water to be shipped, so as to be ready, if possible, to sail from Plymouth in the course of a fortnight from this time, to join you upon such rendezvous, and at such time, as you, by letter to Lord Shuldham, may be pleased to appoint.

The Valiant and Flora at Spithead, and the Gibraltar at Plymouth, will have orders by to-morrow's post, to proceed without a moment's delay, to join you upon the rendezvous off Ushant. I am, with great regard,

Sir,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

Philip Stephens.

Francis Geary, Esq;

Admiral of the White, &c. at sea.

Admiralty-Office, February 6, 1782.

Substance of the intelligence received of the movement of the Spanish fleets at Cadiz and Ferrol, in the months of February and March, 1781.

Prepared in pursuance of an order from the Honourable House of Commons, dated 24th January, 1782.

SUBSTANCE of the INTELLIGENCE.

Received 24th January, 1781.—Eighteen ships were to go out of Cadiz far as the Canaries, to meet Don Solano.

6th Feb.

6th February.—About twenty-eight ships of the line, all Spanish, and three or four frigates, in Cadiz bay, on the 24th January.

An order arrived here, two days before, for ten sail of the line to proceed to sea; supposed to meet at the Canaries the trade from the South Seas and the West-Indies.

Since the 7th of November, when Compte D'Estaing sailed from Cadiz to Brest with the French ships of war and about one hundred sail of merchant ships, none of the above Spanish ships of the line had put to sea; nor had any arrived at Cadiz except six or seven of those that had escorted Compte D'Estaing towards Cape Finisterre, and returned seven or eight days afterwards.

8th February.—Twenty-six ships to be commanded by Don Cordova; and Beaufset was to join him with nine from Toulon with Barcello, and would give battle to the English fleet going to Gibraltar.

9th February.—Nothing known of the destination of Mr. D'Estaing, his squadron was preparing, and it was said the Spaniards were to join him at Brest.

Twelve ships had sailed from Cadiz, before the 16th of January, under Don Vincente Doz, it was supposed, to meet Don Solano, who was impatiently expected from the West-Indies; though some people thought that he had other business on his hands.

11th February.—The Spanish fleet at Cadiz, consisting of thirty-one ships, ready to sail on the 12th ultimo, ten of them particularly, which are victualled for four months.

The following is a list of the Spanish ships at Cadiz; of which twenty-four are ready for sea, making with those of the French, with Beaufset, thirty-one in all. The Spanish ships very foul—seven of them have not been cleaned these six years.

	Guns.		Guns.
La Santa Trinidad	114	El Septentrion	70
El Rayo	80	El Vigilante	70
San Carlos	80	San Isidro	70
San Vincente	80	San Justo	70
El Foudre	80	San Raphael	70
Minotaure	74	San Pablo	70
Magnanime	74	El Seriofo	70
Santa Isabella	70	El Atlas	70
San Miguel	70	San J. Baptista	70
Angel de la Guardia	70	San Damasco	70
San France de Paula	70	San Joaquin	70
San Evedro	70	San Lorenzo	70
Conception de la Virgen	84	El Leandro	70
San Fernando	80	San Pasqual	70
El Vincedor	70	San Pedro Apostol	70

22d February.—Compte D'Estaing to command the fleet of observation, which will consist again of more than thirty ships, it will be joined by twelve Spanish ships, and perhaps by a greater number of those belonging to the Powers of the Armed Neutrality. He will harrafs the coasts of England very violently during the whole campaign.

Don Vincente Doz had not been able to sail from Cadiz with his division, consisting of ten ships of the line and four frigates, owing to contrary winds, but was in constant readiness for sailing, and generally supposed to be going to cruise off the Capes.

The Spanish fleet was upon the watch to receive the English fleet if it came in its way.

3d March.—Orders had been sent to Ferrol for six ships of the line, which were there, to proceed immediately to Cadiz; at which place there would be (when they arrived) thirty-nine of the line.

3d March.—Don Cordova was in the road of Cadiz on the 2d ultimo, with thirty-seven ships to wait for the English squadron going to Gibraltar. When Don Cordova is joined by Don Barcelo, he will have a fleet sufficient to defeat the purposes of the English. The Spanish frigates are every where upon the look out to gain intelligence, and bring an account of any thing which is coming.

3d March.—Six ships gone to Cadiz, at which place the *Majestueux* of 110 guns, with *Beaufet's* four ships, and four which were with *Barcelo* at *Algeiras*. Cordova is to have twenty-eight of the line, making, with the French ships, a combined fleet of thirty-six of the line.

Don Doz to have ten ships to meet the galleons. Twenty fire-ships fitted in order to attempt to burn the English fleet should it pass the Streights.

5th March.—Don Cordova, with his squadron, consisting of thirty-two ships of the line and ten frigates, sailed on the 6th ult. with a fair wind to meet the English fleet coming to the relief of Gibraltar.

12th March.—The Spanish fleet under Cordova, in consequence of orders from Madrid to put to sea, with as many ships as he could possibly collect, sailed from Cadiz on the 5th of February, with a fleet, consisting of nearly of the following numbers, viz.

	Guns.		Guns.
2 of -	112	6 of -	30 to 36
4 - -	80	8 sloops	10 to 14
24 - -	70	2 fireships.	
2 - -	60	2 bombs.	
<hr/> 32 of the line.		<hr/> 18 frigates, &c.	

Their object is to intercept the convoy going to Gibraltar, or to meet their fleet expected from the West-Indies, and probably some of them to go on to replace such as are coming from thence.

12th March.—The Spanish fleet consisting of thirty-two ships of the line and six frigates, compleatly equipped and provided with every thing necessary, was cruising, as was believed, off the Capes, in such a manner as to block the Streights.

The Spanish fleet, with a Dutch ship of 50 guns, has been cruising ever since the 6th of February, between Cape St. Vincent and Cape Spartel, so that it is impossible for the English to pass to Gibraltar without being discovered.

Don Barcelo' guards the Streights with eight ships and eighteen other vessels.

13th March.—No squadron ever went from the ports of Spain more complete, better provided with all necessaries, or under more positive orders to fight, than Cordova's, it was stationed between the Capes St. Mary and Spartel, as near as possible to the Straits, with vessels upon the look out to bring accounts of every thing which passed.

Barcelo' had been reinforced at Algeiras, and had with him, exclusive of boats, fifteen or sixteen fire-ships, and it was supposed that Gibraltar

was reduced to the last necessity. If the English approach, there will be a most bloody engagement.

14th March.—Eight ships had sailed from Ferrol to Cadiz.

15th March.—The Spanish fleet, consisting of thirty ships of the line and six frigates, had sailed to oppose the ships destined for the relief of Gibraltar, and was cruising between the Capes St. Mary and St. Vincent.

17th March.—The Spanish fleet, consisting of fifty sail, thirty-two supposed to be of the line, sailed 5th February from Cadiz, appeared off Lagos on the 9th, and again on the 17th. A cutter was sent into that Bay, and it was said, they were forty-eight sail, twenty-two of them of the line; the others might be further out at sea; and it was also said, they might be waiting for the English fleet and convoy going to Gibraltar.

17th March.—The Spanish fleet was cruising between Capes Spartel and St. Mary, and had entirely blocked up the entrance of the Straits. The English will pass their time very ill, if they make their appearance.

20th March.—Cordova's squadron was cruising on the 1st, between the Capes, and had taken eight victuallers bound to Gibraltar.

23d March.—The combined fleets of France and Spain had been out, consisting of thirty-four line of battle ships, and had put back again in a gale of wind.

25th March.—The Spanish fleet was out on the 3d instant, cruising off Cape St. Vincent, said to consist of above thirty ships of the line.

There were no French ships at Cadiz when they sailed, but it had been given out that some were to join them from Toulon: that, however, not certain.

26th March.—An engagement was impatiently expected between the Spanish and English squadrons. Cordova, when joined to Barcelo, will have a superiority. The Spanish fleet consists only of thirty sail of the line, besides frigates.

27th March.—The Spanish fleet, consisting of thirty-one or thirty-two sail of the line, were, on the 5th or 6th of March, cruising eighteen leagues N. W. of Cape St. Vincent.

Thirty Spanish ships of the line, and three French frigates, laying off Cape St. Vincent on the 12th of March, to intercept the English fleet going to Gibraltar.

27th March.—The St. Ferdinand was returned into the Bay of Cadiz to stop a leak, and the Majestueux, of 110 guns, was expected from Toulon.

31st March.—Cordova had taken a privateer and four large vessels, laden with provisions, which were endeavouring to get into Gibraltar. Every thing with respect to his squadron, continued as it was on the 2d instant.

2d April.—Cordova's squadron on the same station as before, fully determined to wait for the English fleet. There will certainly be an action.

2d April.—The combined fleets of France and Spain, consisting of thirty-four line of battle ships, had, on the 19th of March, been out, but had put back again in a gale of wind.

8th April.—A fleet seen off the Coast of Portugal on the 16th of March, moving southward, supposed to be the British fleet. By the last accounts the Spanish Fleet was cruising between Cape St. Vincent and Cape St. Mary's.

8th April.—The Spaniards have established their cruize between Cape St. Mary and Cape Spartel, courageously waiting for the English.

12th April.—Different accounts at Lisbon on the 31st of March about the Spanish fleet. It was said they were gone back to Cadiz, and that they had been reinforced by three of the line and a frigate from Ferrol, but no certainty of it.

16th April.—Cordova's Squadron kept constantly cruizing up to the 13th of March, in good condition, near the Straits.

16th April.—There had been a report that it returned to Cadiz the 14th of March, but it was known that it was on its former station on the 18th; it was afterwards said that it actually returned on the 19th to water, and was to put to sea again immediately, to meet the English.

21st April.—On the 23d of March, in the afternoon, five or six ships of Cordova's Squadron were seen standing towards Cadiz, and there was no doubt that one division of his fleet would come in the next day, and the remainder of it successively.

21st April.—Cordova's fleet came back to Cadiz on the 17th ultimo for water and provisions, and was to return, and cruize in five or six days.

21st April.—Four ships of the line had been equipped at Ferrol; their destination unknown; and that for want of marines, the regiment de Lisbonne, or a part of it, had been ordered to embark on board them.

24th April.—Part of Cordova's Squadron returned to Cadiz on the 27th of March, the remainder expected next day to land their sick, recruit their provisions, and then to return with five more ships, in search of the English, near Cape St. Vincent.

24th April.—The Spanish fleet was seen about four leagues from Cadiz on the 23d of March, but their number not ascertained.

26th April.—The Spanish Squadron has returned for the sole purpose of landing six hundred sick, taking on board, in their stead, seven hundred who were in health, and recruiting its provisions; after which it was to depart again, having received orders to sail by the 17th at latest. No doubt of a battle.

30th April.—The Spanish fleet returned to Cadiz on the 27th of March, and put to sea on the 3d of April, reinforced with the

	Guns.		
St. Pierre, of	-	-	70
St. Ferdinand, of	-	-	70
St. Isidore, of	-	-	60

and then consisted of thirty-three sail of the line. It seemed to be morally certain that Cordova's orders were to wait for Admiral Darby off the Strait's Mouth, and risque an engagement.

2d May.—The Spanish fleet was in Cadiz on the 5th of April, and Cordova was put to sea by the 10th, after taking in water and refreshments, would certainly attack the English, had thirty-four ships of the line, besides many frigates and fire-ships.

7th May.—The last accounts at Lisbon on the 14th of April were, that the Spanish fleet, to the number of thirty-three, large and small, anchored in the Bay of Cadiz on the 30th of March, and had not been out since. What was become of the remainder did not appear, but it was supposed they had been sent forward, for the protection of their possessions abroad.

9th May.—Cordova sent into Lagos, on the 7th of March, for refreshments for his fleet, which consisted of thirty-two ships, twenty-four of them supposed to be of the line. It was thought he did not mean to attack the English, but only to protect the Havannah fleet.

His squadron, after cruising two months, had returned into port for ten days, by order of the King.

Admiralty-Office, 6th February, 1782.

Substance of the intelligence received at any time of the equipping of Monsieur De la Motte Piquet's squadron at Brest, after Vice-Admiral Darby's sailing in March 1781.

Prepared pursuant to an order of the honourable House of Commons, dated the 24th January 1782.

SUBSTANCE of the INTELLIGENCE.

Received 2d April, 1781.—Orders received at Brest on the 21st of March, to fit out immediately the following six ships for Monsieur De la Motte Piquet, viz.

La Couronne
La Robuste
L'Indien

Le Magnifique
Le Dauphin Royal
Le Lion

and orders had been given at the same time to refit the Royal Louis, Terrible, Invincible, and Hardi in the road; and for the Bretagne, which is coppered, to proceed thither—The cause not known.

6th April.—The ships which were to have composed Monsieur De la Motte Piquet's squadron have been changed; he is to go on board the Invincible of 110 guns, and to have under him

Le Bien Aimé
L'Actif
L'Alexandre

L'Hardi
Le Lion.

These ships are only to have five months provisions, and are, as it is said, to go to Cadiz to bring back a good part of the Spanish fleet.

11th April.—Monsieur De la Motte Piquet's squadron not destined to America; the ships of it are indifferent, except his own, and not going a long voyage by their preparation.

There were six sail of the line in Brest Road on the 24th of March ready for sea; and fifteen more were fitting out with the utmost expedition, which it was thought would be ready by the end of this month: the whole twenty-one sail to be commanded by Monsieur La Motte Piquet, who was going on some secret expedition, with about 13,000 troops, which were hourly expected at Brest.

12th April.—They were diligently arming at Brest six ships of the line, which would be ready in eight days (from the beginning of this month.) Monsieur De la Motte Piquet was to have the command of them; and it was supposed he would go to the Texel to join the Dutch squadron, in order to act in concert.

24th April.—Monsieur De la Motte Piquet was arrived at Brest on the 11th instant; was to sail in a few days; had embarked sixteen Dutch coast-

ing pilots, which made it believed he was going to Holland to join the forces of the States-General, and twelve Swedish ships; but that waited confirmation.

30th April.—Monsieur De la Motte Piquet's squadron would be ready to sail about the middle of next month, and it was to consist of six ships of the line, and some frigates: his destination variously spoken of; but the more general opinion seemed to be, that it was to join the Dutch squadron from the Texel. In confirmation of which it had been asserted, that several Dutch pilots and schippers had been dispatched to Brest to conduct the squadron north about. All the other ships lying in Brest harbour, and amounting, as it was said, to twelve sail of the line, had likewise received orders to prepare for sea as speedily as possible; in consequence of which, there had been a general press of sailors on board the merchantmen and privateers in the different ports, insomuch that the greater part of the latter were obliged to disarm for want of hands.

1st May.—The squadron of Monsieur De la Motte Piquet was in Brest Road on the 18th of April, and only waited for its final orders for sailing. He was recovered, and at Brest.

2d May.—It was thought probable on the 20th, that his departure would be deferred.

2d May.—La Motte Piquet was ordered for the Texel, and two more ships added to his squadron, making eight: he was to go in the *Invincible*, and would depart immediately.

Every thing at Brest was going on with the greatest dispatch; carpenters had been ordered from Rochfort and L'Orient, to forward the ships fitting for sea.

7th May.—La Motte Piquet sailed 25th April into the Road, and put to sea next day, with six ships of the line and two cutters, with twenty ships and vessels of the States of Holland, under his convoy, going north about.

9th May.—As he had not taken on board more than two months provisions, it was thought the service he was going upon would not be of long duration.

11th May.—His final instructions arrived at Brest the 25th ultimo in the morning, and at noon he was under way with his squadron, consisting of the following ships:

	Guns.		Guns.
L'Invincible	110	Le Lion	64
Le Bien Aimé	74	La Sibille	34
L'Actif	74	La Nereide	34
L'Alexandre	64	La Leverette	
Le Hardi	64	Le Chasseur	

11th May.—Generally thought that Monsieur De la Motte Piquet, who had sailed from Brest with six ships of the line and four frigates, was bound to North-America.

Admiralty Office, 6th Feb. 1782.

Substance of the intelligence received at any time of the equipment and sailing of Monf. de Grasse with his force for the West-Indies, in the months of February and March, 1781.

Prepared in pursuance of an order of the honourable House of Commons, dated the 24th of January, 1782.

SUBSTANCE

SUBSTANCE of the INTELLIGENCE.

Received, 9th Feb. 1781.—Orders arrived at Brest the 26th January to hasten a Squadron of nineteen ships, and six frigates for Monsf. de la Touche Treville.

10th February.—Monsf. de la Motte Piquet was not to command the fleet. On the contrary, the King had appointed Mr. de la Touche Treville to command that which was destined for America. His Squadron as follows, viz.

	Guns.		Guns.
La Ville de Paris	104	Le Pluton	74
L' Auguste	80	Le Diademe	74
Le Sceptre	74	Le Zelé	74
Le Cesar	74	La Bourgogne	74
Le Magnanime	74	Le Scipion	74
Le St. Esprit	80	L' Hector	74
Le Citoyen	74	L' Hercule	74
Le Soverain	74	Le Glorieux	74
Le Languedoc	80	L' Artesien	64
Le Heros	74	Le Vaillant	64
Le Northumberland	74	Le Verigeur	64
Le Annibal	74	Le Sphynx	64
Le Marcellios	74		

27th February.—The works went on with great dispatch in fitting the fleet; by the end of the month twenty sail would be ready at Brest.

Directions were given at Rochfort for the same dispatch. Orders were gone for four ships of the line to be ready to sail for the East-Indies in ten days, from l'Orient. Ten ships had been coppered at Brest since January, and five sail of the line gone to Cadiz to join the Spanish fleet.

Intended that the troops should be ready by the middle of next month to reinforce Monsf. de Rochambeau, and would go there with a large squadron.

22d Feb.—Not as yet able to form any conjectures respecting the destination of the squadron preparing for sea with the greatest diligence in Brest harbour, whether the whole of it was bound to the West-Indies, or whether a part might not be intended to separate from the rest in a certain latitude, and sail immediately for Rhode Island. At all events, there seemed to be no doubt that it would consist of from twenty to twenty-four sail of the line, besides frigates, and that it would be in readiness to put to sea early in April.

Monsf. de la Touche Treville, made Lieutenant General of the Marine, was to have taken leave of the Court on the 4th instant, and to set out immediately for Brest.

The following is a list of the ships he is to command:

	Guns.		Guns.
La Ville de Paris	110	Le Zelé	74
L' Auguste	80	Le Marcellios	74
Le St. Esprit	80	La Bourgogne	74
Le Languedoc	80	Le Scipion	74
Le Sceptre	74	Le Hector	74
Le Cesar	74	L' Hercule	74
Le Magnanime	74	Le Souverain	74
Le Citoyen	74	Le Glorieux	74
Le Heros	74	L'	74
Le Northumberland	74	Le Artesien	64
L' Annibal	74	Le Vengeur	64
Le Pluton	74	Le Sphynx	64
Le Diademe	74		

The frigates not yet named.

Of the above-mentioned list, four are to go to the East-Indies.

On the 11th instant, they were fitting out at Brest, with the utmost expedition, the armament intended for the West-Indies.

27th Feb.—The Armament was going on briskly at Brest the 14th instant.

The Comte de Grasse, named to the command of the fleet for America, took leave of the King the 18th, and was to set out immediately for Brest.

3d March.—The Comte de Grasse was certainly gone on the 23d of February to forward the armament at Brest, but there had been a rumour the day before, that the Comte de Chaffault was to have the command of it, and that he was to set out on the 18th of February, for Brest.

6th March.—The Marquis de Castries was gone to Brest. De Grasse was dispatched to take the command of the fleet destined for America, consisting of twenty-five sail of the line, and would first join Don Cordova.

Some of the ships had received damage in the storm, which drove them from the Road into Brest Water with loss of bowsprits, which would retard their being so soon got ready.

The balon full of ships, and the works carried on with great dispatch.

The ships which sailed the 9th of February, were put back to Brest.

12th March.—The Marquis de Castries was going to Brest to give orders relative to the sailing of the fleet.

13th March.—Mons. de Grasse arrived at Brest on the 25th February. Has the command of twenty-five ships destined for the Antilles, and is to embark on board the Ville de Paris.

16th March.—De Grasse's fleet of twenty-five ships of the line, three frigates, and three sloops, would all be ready in Brest road by the 7th instant, but it was thought would not sail in less than three weeks.

They were certainly fixed to go to the West-Indies.

16th March.—Mons. de Castries was gone to Brest, to hasten the departure of the French fleet, which was ready to sail with the first fair wind, and consisted of twenty-two sail of the line, to be commanded by Mons. de Grasse, and certainly, as it was said, to go to the West-Indies.

17th March.—The following is a list of the squadron to sail from Brest under Mons. de Grasse.

	Guns.		Guns.
La Ville de Paris	110	Le Zelé	74
L' Auguste	80	Le Marcellus	74
Le St. Esprit	80	La Bourgogne	74
Le Languedoc	80	Le Scipion	74
Le César	74	Le Hector	74
Le Sceptre	74	L' Hercule	74
Le Souverain	74	Le Glorieux	74
Le Heros	74	Le Citoyen	74
Le Northumberland	74	L' Arcticien	64
L' Hannibal	74	Le Vaillant	64
Le Pluton	74	Le Vengeur	64
Le Diademe	74	Le Sphinx	64
Le Magnanime	74	Le Sagittaire	50

20 March.—The fleet was in Brest road ready to sail on the 7th instant.

Six or seven thousand men, who were to go on board it, were expected to arrive there on the 15th or 16th instant, to embark immediately; and the

day ~~six~~ for its departure was the 18th or 19th, if the wind would
nit.

On the before-mentioned list, the following ships are sheathed with wood,
filled; viz.

Languedoc,	Le Marsellios,
Le César,	Le Vaillant,
Le Sagittaire,	

All the rest (except Le Magnanime, which is unsheathed) are sheathed
with copper.

2d March.——It was believed, that Monf. de Grasse would not have
been ready by the end of this month,

V. B. From an accident, the above blank could not be precisely supplied
from former accounts; it could not refer to more than twenty-five,
including four or five said to be intended for the Isle of France.

4th March.——On the 9th instant, they were expecting the arrival of
Marquis de Castries at Brest, to give orders for the sailing of the fleet,
wind having been fair for eight days.

4th March.——The following ships added to Monf. de Grasse's
adron.

L' Aétif 74 L' Alexandre 64 Le Sagittaire 54

5th March.——Monf. De la Motte Piquet was to sail soon after the
beginning of this month from Brest, with twenty-two sail of the line, to the
East-Indies.

11th March.——On the 13th instant all the officers, both in the sea and
land service, who were to sail with Monf. de Grasse's squadron, had re-
ceived orders to repair on board their respective ships the preceding after-
noon; and there was every reason to suppose, that the whole fleet would
go to sea on the following day, or on the 20th at farthest. It consisted of
500 hundred and fifty sail of merchantmen, twenty-seven ships of the line,
twenty-one of which, it was believed, were destined for Martinique, and
the remaining six for the isles of France and Bourbon.

29th March.——De Grasse was certainly to sail the 19th instant, wind
permitting, with twenty-six ships of the line, one of 50 guns.

La Motte Piquet staid behind sick.

Twenty of the above ships were certainly for America, the other six for
Mauritius; after going on their passage together as far as they might not
be intercepted by the English.

The fleet and transports had taken on board 12,000 troops, 3000 of
which go to the Mauritius, and 9000 to reinforce Monf. de Rochambeau
in America; with great quantities of cloathing and all sorts of stores, for
the Americans.

31st March.——On the 14th instant they were embarking, at Louvan-
d at Brest, the troops for the fleet; viz. 6000 regulars in regiments,
and as many more in detachments, to recruit and complete the regiments in
the colonies.

Two frigates and two cutters were to accompany Monf. de Grasse.

No certain Accounts on the 23d of the fleet having sailed from Brest, the
news, which had been contrary on the 18th and 19th, had become fair on
the 20th, and continued.

31st March.——There was a report at Paris on the 23d instant, that a
fleet of thirty-eight ships had sailed from Brest without convoy; supposed to
be gone in pursuit of that of the English, which, having convoy, could not
be lost.

The convoy which the French fleet was to have escorted, consists of more than three hundred sail, and is the largest and richest that ever was seen in France.

2d April.—The *Hector* had been repaired; would go with the fleet; and there was reason to believe, that they would sail on the 20th of March, as the minister wished. The troops were arrived, and embarking the day before.

2d April.—The Brest fleet detained since the 19th of March for want of wind; was not sailed on the 21st at 11, P. M. but the wind was becoming fair, and preparations were making for sailing the next day.

3d April.—Monsieur de Castries was expected at Paris from Brest on the 26th of March; and it was believed by most people, that the fleet would be sailed by that time, though some supposed it could not sail before the 1st of April.

6th April.—The Marquis de Castries returned to Versailles the 27th of March, having had the satisfaction to see the fleet sail from Brest on the 22d, with the wind at N. E. which was out of sight the next morning. Monsieur de Grasse had with him twenty-seven ships of the line, including the *Fier*, and about ten frigates, and a very great number of merchants ships under his convoy. It was said he was to go directly to Cadiz, where seventy merchants ships from Marseilles, and as many Spanish, were waiting to take the benefit of his convoy to the French islands in the West-Indies.

6th April.—The wind coming to the south on the 23d of March, Monsieur de Grasse made the signal to sail, and the whole of his squadron was expected to sail the next day, if the wind continued fair.

Count de Grasse's squadron for Martinique to consist of sixteen ships of the line, Bougainville to command in the place of La Motte Piquet.

Monsieur de Barras, with four ships of the line, was to go to Rhodé-Island with a convoy and troops, to take the command of the squadron there.

8th April.—The French fleet sailed from Brest the 22d of March, consisting of twenty-six ships of the line, besides frigates, &c. with 250 sail of transports with troops on board, and merchants ships under their convoy.

Twenty of the above ships are destined for America, and the other six for the East-Indies.

11th April.—The French fleet, under Monsieur de Grasse, consisting of twenty-five sail of the line besides frigates, and 160 or 180 merchantmen, with many troops on board, sailed from Brest the 22d of March, bound to the West-Indies.

16th April.—The wind had been favourable since the sailing of Monsieur de Grasse's fleet from Brest up to the 30th of March, and continued so then.—It was not then believed that it was to go to Cadiz.

21st April.—On the 6th instant no news had been received at Brest of Monsieur de Grasse since the 27th March, when he had sent back a corvette.

24th April.—By intelligence from Guernsey, dated the 12th instant, it appeared, that a master of a ship put in there from Certe; had seen, on the 29th of March, the French fleet, consisting of 140 sail, amongst which were forty sail of the line, steering W. S. W. in lat. 40. 48. long. 12. but could not tell whether any part of it was Spanish.

Admiralty-Office, 6th February, 1782.

State of the intelligence received of Mons. de Guichen's equipment in May and June 1781, and of his sailing from Brest to Cadiz.

Prepared in pursuance of an order of the honourable House of Commons, dated the 24th of January, 1782.

SUBSTANCE of the INTELLIGENCE.

Received 15th May.—They were working at Brest the 2d of May, without intermission, upon the equipments that are ordered, which will be ready by the end of month.

The Generals will then be appointed, and publicly named.

9th May.—A fresh embarkation of 4000 men is preparing at Brest; millions and half in gold are arrived, but its destination not known.

13d May.—Since the stores are come to Brest, the greatest dispatch is making; the fleet will be ready by the 20th of June; all the officers are appointed, and ordered to Brest. The Rochford ships are ordered to Brest; a fleet of vessels loaded with wine and provisions for the fleet, from the ports in the bay.

11st May.—The Spanish squadron, consisting of thirty-one ships, is to join the Brest squadron composed of twenty-one ships; which squadrons will then be commanded by Mons. d'Estang.

14th June.—There are now ready in Brest water sixteen sail of the line; of which mount 120 guns; these with five or six others are copper-bottomed.

It is conjectured, this squadron is to proceed off L'Orient, and there be joined by some men of war from Rochford; from thence proceed to Ferrol to join the Cadiz fleet, expected to meet them there, otherwise to proceed to Cadiz. They are also to be joined by a squadron of Dutch men of war. Monsieur de la Motte has got safe into Brest with all his prizes.

In Europe, Spain is to send a fleet to Brest to compose forty sail of the line, to engage the attention of the English in the Channel, to prevent their sending succours, and carrying on trade in America, and give the Dutch opportunity to plague and harass the English coasts.

5th June.—Report says, that Mons. de la Motte Piquet is sailed from Brest upon a secret expedition, with six chosen ships and four frigates.

9th June.—A courier extraordinary was dispatched to Brest the 20th of May, with orders for Mons. de la Motte Piquet to put to sea immediately.

11th June.—Mons. de la Motte Piquet was not sailed from Brest the 10th of May; he was then waiting for his orders.

Mons. de Bauffett, Chef d'Escadre, hath been ordered to Brest immediately. The Bretagne is reserved for the commander in chief, who is supposed to be Mons. de Guichen.

16th June.—La Motte Piquet was at Brest on the 5th of June. Mons. de Guichen will command this fleet, which is to be joined by seventeen ships of the line, and to be ready by the 20th of June.

The Actif is in dock, and will have her damages repaired in about ten days.

Ships in the road of Brest	12
Ready in the inner road	5
With yards and topmasts down	4
In dock, Actif and two others	3

24

18th June.—Monf. de Guichen, who is appointed to command the European fleet, has received orders to hold himself in readiness to sail; his instructions will soon be sent him. He will sail with twenty-one ships; the *Illustre*, and *Majestieux* are to join him. Monf. de la Motte Piquet's expedition is laid aside; he will command the van.

18th June.—Monf. de Guichen will command the Brest fleet, but as Monf. de la Motte Piquet will sail soon with ten sail of the line, he will have none left in Brest; nor is it likely any more will be ready there for two Months.

The plan of the campaign in Europe, is certainly to infest the English commerce, and carefully avoid an engagement with the English fleet; for the ships of France and Spain in these seas, are in bad condition, and fit only for short summer cruizes.

It is reported, that La Motte Piquet and Laurens have sailed.

18th June.—Monf. de la Motte Piquet is still at Brest, with the squadron of six ships of the line and four frigates. There are fifteen sail of the line more lying in the harbour, ready to put to sea, as soon as Count D'Estaing and Prince Mountbazon shall arrive to take the command of them. This, however, will not be until Don Cordova, whose fleet consists of twenty-eight ships of the line, six frigates, and three cutters, exclusive of the three men of war from Rochford, and two or three from Toulon, which have already joined him at Cadiz, shall be known to be off the coast of Brittany. It seems as if the project of Monf. de la Motte Piquet's going as far as Cape Finisterre, to meet the Spanish admiral, has been laid aside, on account of admiral Darby's having left a division of his fleet to cruize at sea for some time after his own return into port.

22d June.—Monf. de Guichen hath orders to sail the 15th or 20th of this month, and to proceed to Vigo.

23d June.—Monf. de Guichen has taken the command of the fleet at Brest, and Motte Piquet, Beauflott, and Vaudreuil, are to command under him. There are now twenty ships at Brest ready for sea; seventeen in the outer road.

23d June.—Monf. de Guichen has received orders to sail from Brest the 16th at farthest.

30th June.—The fleet at Brest was ready in the road the 15th instant, but it is said, that Monf. de Guichen not having found his instructions sufficiently explicit, has sent to Versailles for an explanation.

The fleet is ready to leave Brest under the orders of Monf. de Guichen, who is embarked in the *Bretagne*. Monf. de Cry, in the *Ville de Paris*. Monf. de Beauflott, in the *Invincible*. Monf. de la Motte Piquet, who was ready to go on a cruize, hath received other orders, and is now to proceed with all the fleet. There are now in the road twenty sail of the line: Three arrived from Rochford, and the *Majestieux* from Cadiz. We hear that the Spanish fleet is near the coast of Gascony.

Monf. de Guichen was to sail from Brest on the 20th, upon a cruize, as it was supposed into the bay, with eighteen sail of the line, several of which are but indifferently manned and ill fitted for the sea.

2d July.—The whole of the grand Spanish fleet returned to Cadiz the 24th of June, without having detached any ships to join the French squadron at Brest. By accounts received from that port, the French squadron must have put to sea between the 20th and 25th instant.

3d July.—On the 20th of last month the French fleet, consisting of eighteen ships of the line, three of which are of three decks, and eight frigates, sailed under the command of Monsieur de Guichen, but were obliged

igned to return in the afternoon. This fleet was to sail again the following day, and to be joined off Rochford by the *Illustre*, *St. Michell*, and *Amphion*, with the vessels under their convoy, which they are to escort as far as Cape Finisterre, and then go to Ferrol, and wait the arrival of the Spanish fleet, and of the *Majestieux*.

14th July.—The Brest fleet waits only to be joined by the *Illustre* and *Michell* from Rochford, and then will go to sea.

15th July.—The fleet under the command of Monsieur de Guichen, consisting of twenty-two ships of the line, and of a great number of frigates, to join the Spaniards off Ushant. Monsieur de la Motte Piquet will command a squadron of fifteen ships, five of which are to be taken from the Spaniards: he will separate from the fleet at a certain latitude, to go on a secret expedition; Minorca is thought to be the object.

16th July.—It is supposed, Monsieur de Guichen received his orders on the 20th, and that he will go to sea immediately.

17th July.—Monsieur de Guichen sailed the 20th of June from Brest, with twenty sail of the line, and nine frigates. Two ships from Rochford, the *St. Michell* and *Amphion* from L'Orient, with the convoy from the Isle of Aix, are to join him. The *Majestieux* is not come to Brest, but will join the fleet off Cape Finisterre.

The English fleet was seen by the *Atalanta* on the 16th to the west of Ushant. Monsieur de Guichen has orders to attack them, upon a presumption of their weakness.

18th July.—The fleet sailed from Brest the 23d of June in the morning, with a fair wind.

When it returned into Brest water on the 20th, the *Magnifique* and *Terrible* ran on board each other, and were both damaged.

19th July.—Monsieur de Guichen sailed with a force from Brest the 23d of June; said to consist of from eighteen to twenty-two sail of the line, and several frigates; his destination not certainly known, but is given out to be for Ferrol or Cadiz.

20th July.—The French fleet, consisting of eighteen sail of the line, commanded by Monsieur de Guichen, sailed from Brest on the 23d of June, on a cruise, into the Bay of Biscay.

21st July.—Abstract of the French fleet which sailed under the command of Monsieur de Guichen, on the 23d of June.

Ships of 110 guns	—	—	4
of 80	—	—	1
of 74	—	—	8
of 70	—	—	1
of 64	—	—	4
			—
			18
Frigates	—	—	3
Cutters	—	—	3

16th July.—List of the ships of war under the command of Monsieur de Guichen, now in the road of Brest, which are to proceed to sea the first fair wind.

	Guns.		Guns.
La Bretagne	110	L'Actif	74
Le Majestueux	110	L'Illustre	74
Le Terrible	110	L'Hardi	64
Le Royal Louis	110	Le Guerier	74
L'Invincible	104	L'Alexandre	64
Le Robuste	74	L'Indien	64
Le Pendant	74	Le Lyon	64
La Magnifique	74	Le St. Michel	64
Le Roulier	74	L'Amazone	32
Le Bien Aime	74	La Bellone	32
Le Triomphant	80		

The four last are coppered, and are to proceed to India.

10th July.—It is known from Rochford and Bourdeaux, that Monsieur de Guichen has not passed near that coast, which makes it believed that the fleet has taken some other rout, probably to look out for a large English convoy soon expected.

21st July.—Monsieur de Guichen has no orders to attack any of the English ports; his fleet consists at present but of seventeen ships of the line, and five frigates, and are poorly manned. He was obliged to take with him six hundred raw soldiers, for want of the necessary compliment of seamen. The Lion and St. Michell, which at first made part of his fleet, have been detached upon other service.

Admiralty-Office, 6th February, 1782.

Substance of the intelligence received of the French armament at Brest, at any time from the month of September to the sailing of Rear Admiral Kempensfelt, on the 6th of December, 1781.

Prepared in pursuance of an order of the Hon. House of Commons, dated the 24th January, 1782.

SUBSTANCE of the INTELLIGENCE.

Received 11th September, 1781.—The combined fleets are to cruize to the west of the south part of Ireland from eighty to one hundred leagues, and to keep in the stream of the English Channel till the end of September.

4th October.—At Brest they are employed in repairing the ships that stand in need of it, which when done, two squadrons are to be formed, one of ten sail is to be commanded by Mons. Vaudreuil who is to carry them to Cadiz to join the Spaniards; the other is to be under the command of Mons. de la Mothe Piquet, to proceed on a cruize and form a squadron of observation.

5th October.—The Marquis de Vaudreuil is going to the West Indies to command; Belcombe to be general and commander in chief.

6th October.—Letters from Brest of the 21st of September speak only of the dispatch with which they are repairing the ships.

8th October.—The Bretagne, Terrible, Guerier, Proteſteur, Alexandre, and Hardi are arrived at Brest; the three last are armés in flute.

Transports are provided to carry fourteen thousand men to New England.

8th October.—The combined fleets are soon to separate, the Spanish commander in chief having received orders to be at Cadiz, before the 12th

ptember. The Brest fleet under the command of Monf. de Guichen, being reinforced by some ships of the line, will put to sea again the ning of October; they are to give convoy to 10,000 troops who are est ready for embarkation, as far as a certain latitude. One hundred s of cannon of 48, 36, and 24 pounders, and a quantity of powder, is, balls, and other implements of war are to be embarked with the s.

is formidable armament is supposed to be destined for America and ast Indies.

ie Bretagne and the Actif are gone into the bason being in want of repair. Terrible and the Royal Louis must also go into the bason for the same n.—Six ships of the line are to escort the numerous convoy which have preparing at Brest.

th October.—Orders are given to make the greatest dispatch at Brest Rochford in refitting the ships for the East and West Indies.

th October.—The Courronne is masted and coppered and is to be comded by Monf. de la Motte Piquet.

he Pegafus of 74 guns will be launched the 15th or 20th of October.

here are now in the port of Brest on the careen, or ready to be careen—the Bretagne, Terrible, Magnifique, Protecteur, Dauphin Royal, Roer, Guerier, and Alexander, the two last are armés en flute. The Trihant must be refitted. The Invincible is not a good ship. The fleet not be ready to sail in more than a month.

5th October.—All the operations at Brest and Rochford tend to ple the convoy destined for America to sail as soon as possible. Transs are daily arriving at Brest for the embarkation of the troops, which n the whole will amount to 12,000 men, those who had been in the id fleet being added. Sixty transport vessels are already arrived and e expected, but as they will not be sufficient, the following ships of , viz. Protecteur, Guerier, Alexander and Hardi, will be employed for same purpose.

Monf. de la Motte Piquet is to have only ten ships of the line in case it l be necessary for him to go to Cadiz, for the three other ships belonging is Squadron are not fit for service during this campaign.

9th October.—Four ships at Brest, viz. the Lyon, Alexander, Hardi, Guerier, armés en flute are to carry out stores. The number of ships ered are eighteen of the line. A number of ships are got into Brest from Malo and Nantz. Four ships of the line from Rochford are at the Isle Aix, ready for sea.

A large train of artillery is shipping at Brest; Monf. de Vaudreuil is orded to that port and will sail sooner than was at first ordered, as every exon is made.

9th October.—The armament at Brest only waits for orders to sail, l is spoken of as a very formidable fleet both in point of ships and the nbers on board. It is expected they will sail about the middle of this nth, but their destination is kept very secret. It is said 3000 men will sent to the East Indies; Monf. de Vaudreuil will conduct those forces h four ships of the line.—The troops engaged by the Dutch East India npany will probably sail at the same time.

The Courronne is gone out of the bason; the Hardi and Alexander are to armés en flute; the Lyon is yet in the bason, and is likewise to be armés flute, but the Guerier and Protecteur will not be fitted out in that maner, as was intended.

It is thought *Monf. de Guichen* will sail with the *Marquis de Vaudreuil* to a certain latitude, and then quit him for *Cadiz*.

19th October.—The ten ships which are to proceed from *Brest* to *Cadiz* are ready to put to sea; but they fear meeting the English fleet.

19th October.—The squadron for the Islands cannot be got in readiness to sail before the end of November.

The *Courronne* will soon be ready. The *Pegasus* will be in the water in a little time. The *Triomphant* came into port the 3d of October.

28th October.—The bottoms of the *Terrible*, *Protecteur*, *Guerier*, and *Majestueux*, are to be coppered.

The *Hardi* and *Alexander* are still to be armés en flute, and their guns to be put into their holds.

28th October.—Of the nineteen ships which are to compose *Monf. de Guichen's* squadron, ten are come into the harbour; the *Magnifique* is the only one in the road; the *Dauphin Royal* will proceed thither to-morrow.

The *Hardi* and *Alexander* are armés en flute; the *Terrible*, *Bretagne*, *Triomphant*, *Protecteur* and *Guerier*, were to go into the basin the next tide, the two last to be coppered, and the others to repair their damages.

28th October.—Orders arrived at *Brest* the 17th of October, to hasten the ships destined for the Islands.

The *Hardi* and *Alexander*, armés en flute, are commanded by auxiliary lieutenants.

All the ships in the road take in six months provisions.

Vessels are daily arriving from *St. Malo*, *Nantz*, and *Bordeaux*, and are loading to take the benefit of the convoy. The *Pegasus* was launched the 15th, and is gone into the basin to be coppered, and the *Guerier* to be rebuilt. The *Bretagne* was prevented going in for want of water. The *Terrible* is to be coppered. The *Triomphant* wants repair, and being hove down carelessly, had like to have sunk in the harbour.

31st October.—Twelve ships of the line are quite complete at *Brest*: the troops, amounting to 12,000, which are to embark in the expedition, are arrived. All the artillery is shipped, and the fleet will sail by the 10th of November.

3d November.—The embarkation of the troops at *Brest*, and the convoy destined for the West Indies, appear to be retarded, and to be subject to great and innumerable difficulties. *Monf. de Vaudreuil* is not a little embarrassed with regard to the complement of his squadron, which is to consist, upon the whole, in ten ships, four of which are to be armés en flute, and a great part of them must undergo a very expensive repair, before they will be able to hold out a new campaign. To get, however, a sufficient number of men for that service, orders have been given to press a proportionable number of vintagers, in the districts of *Nantz* and *Bordeaux*. As all the ships will be much lumbered, and consequently unable to resist in case of an attack, *Monf. de Vaudreuil* is supposed to put off sailing from *Brest*, till he is sure the British fleet have returned into port.

3d November.—The advices from *Brest* speak only of the dispatch they are making to equip the fleet fitting out there for sea.

12th November.—Five ships of the line are to be added to the squadron destined for the attack of *Jamaica*. The 15th of November was the day fixed for the sailing of the fleet from *Brest*.

14th November.—Every thing was embarked on board the ships by the beginning of November; two of their ships have run on board each other in a gale of wind, one of which is so damaged, she cannot go to sea, and will be

be replaced by another ship, if one can be got ready. Eighteen ships of the line, with two armés en flûte.

17th November.—The squadron under Monf. de Vaudreuil are to go directly to Boston, and the squadron commanded by Monf. de la Motte Piquet, which is to consist of seven sail of the line, is destined to intercept the convoys the English are expecting.

The squadron under Monf. de Guichen will be ready by the 15th or 20th of November, and is to consist of eighteen large ships and six frigates.

Monf. de Vaudreuil is to separate off Madeira with six ships and two frigates, and to escort a convoy of 200 sail to the West Indies.

21st November.—The armament preparing at Brest is destined to join Monf. de Grasse upon the coast of America, after having touched at Martinico. The armament is to consist of eight sail of the line, besides frigates and transports; is to take on board about 3000 land forces, including recruits for the regiments now in America, and will be ready to put to sea about Christmas. It is now said, it will be commanded by Monf. de la Motte Piquet, and not by Monf. de Vaudreuil.

22d November.—Monf. de Vaudreuil is to sail considerably sooner than was expected, and the 20th is now fixed.

Every possible exertion is used to get away Monf. de Vaudreuil; and it is more and more evident his destination is for the East Indies. A convoy for the West Indies will sail probably at the same time, or soon after the 20th instant.

The appearances which have led the public to believe Monf. de Vaudreuil was going to the East Indies; were mere contrivances to deceive. There is now the greatest reason to believe he is going westward, and most probably to act in conjunction with a Spanish force, going also from Europe, and most likely against Jamaica.

27th November.—The fleet from Brest, consisting of nineteen ships and an immense convoy, will sail from thence the 20th, or 25th of November. They will divide when at sea into three squadrons: Monf. de Vaudreuil, with six ships and four frigates, will escort the convoy to Martinico; Monf. de Guichen, with seven of the largest ships, will proceed to Cadiz; and Monf. de la Motte Piquet, with six ships and two frigates, is to proceed upon a particular service. The troops, and provisions of all kinds, are embarking.

3d December.—The fleet from Brest may possibly put to sea the end of November, or beginning of December. Its destination is for the West Indies, and its first object an attack upon Jamaica, in conjunction with the Spaniards at the Havannah. Twelve thousand men are at Brest, in readiness to embark at the shortest notice.

4th December.—It is difficult to form any fixed idea of the destination of the fleet and forces, which are preparing with great efforts to get them in readiness. The ships at Brest are already allotted to Monf. de Vaudreuil and Monf. de la Motte Piquet; and, it is said, this last squadron is to be dispatched to succour Spain, in case the British fleet should sail to the Mediterranean, which makes it difficult to say what number of ships will be left for foreign service; yet it is thought Monf. de Vaudreuil will not have more than ten, or ultimately twelve. A large convoy is in readiness at Brest for the West Indies, and another preparing at Rochelle for the East Indies, to act in concert with the Dutch troops. Monf. de Guichen remains in the Bretagne, commander of the fleet at Brest.

The destination of Monf. de Vaudreuil is strongly confirmed for the West Indies, and first for Martinico. The six ships of the line, and 5000

troops, going from Cadiz, are intended for the same quarter, probably to act against Jamaica. It is said Monf. de Vaudreuil will be ready about the 30th of November.

It is certain Monf. de Vaudreuil, and the greatest part of the force, preparing at Brest, is destined for the West Indies, as well as the money lately purchased by government. Monf. de Vaudreuil cannot be ready by the 30th; and if he is to wait for the ships from Bourdeaux, he cannot sail before the end of the year.

N. B. Rear Admiral Kempenfelt sailed from Spithead the 2d of December; the intelligence received at this office from that day to the 6th of that month is nevertheless added, in obedience to the orders of the House.

Admiralty-Office, 5th Feb. 1782.

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Darby, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board his Majesty's ship the Britannia off St. Helens, the 13th March, 1781.

You will be pleased to acquaint my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that I am got without St. Helens with the ships and vessels of the squadron their Lordships have put under my command.

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Darby, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the Britannia off Cape Clear, 23d of March, 1781.

My last to you, was on the 14th instant, when between Portland and the Start.

On the 15th, I dispatched the La Prudente and Pheasant, the first off, and the latter into Cork, to order Captain Inglis out with the convoy. The 16th, I sent the Monsieur off the Old Head of Kinfale; these two ships were designed to conduct the convoy to me, so as to form an easy junction.

Before day on the 17th, the wind drew to the southward, so that at day light I thought it highly prudent to order the Medway and Flora to take the convoy into Cork; at the same time, with the King's ships, to stand to sea, and get an offing; since which, the winds have kept between the West and S. S. E. which prevents the convoy's attempting to come out, and we from making free with the land.

I herewith transmit you an account of what intelligence has been obtained by vessels spoke with, and the last state given in of his Majesty's squadron under my command.

A.

The Kite sloop, on the 19th of March, spoke with a Swede, bound from Alicant to Masterland, who gave an account that the combined fleets of France and Spain, had been out (consisting of thirty-four line of battle ships) but had put back again in a gale of wind.

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Darby, to Mr. Stephens, dated of Cape Spatel, 11th April, 1781.

Sir,

The last opportunity I had of writing to you, was off Cape Clear in Ireland. It was not in my power to inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty of our junction with the convoy on the 27th ult. it blowing fresh to the N. E. and late before we got together.

Extra:

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Darby, to Mr. Stephens, dated 2nd April, 1781.

Early on the morning of the 11th instant, we saw three sail at a distance from each other; I sent the Alexander, Foudroyant and Minerva, to chase. Captain Fielding, who came up the nearest to them, said they were three frigates which made into Cadiz, where he counted thirty-three sail of large ships, six of them had flags and distinguishing pendants, with a number of small ships and craft of all kind.

Yesterday morning I made the signal for the Foudroyant to stand towards Cadiz, the wind would not permit her to fetch it, but Captain Jervis is certain nothing was off the port, from which, with the intelligence herewith transmitted, their Lordships will see that the Spanish fleet must certainly be in port.

B.

INTELLIGENCE.

The Lyon spoke a ship on the 16th April, 1781, whose master reports, that he left Cadiz the day before, when there were twenty-eight sail of the line, ready for sea; they had been out forty-eight hours, and put back again, and were rather sickly.

Another master spoke with; reports that thirty-four sail of the line, five frigates, and four cutters, were in Cadiz bay, and made an appearance of coming out the 12th; they came to an anchor again, and were reported to intend sailing the 15th.

The Foudroyant spoke a ship on the 19th April, out one day from Cadiz, the master reports that there were thirty-three sail of the line, two of them of three decks, all ready for sea, but very sickly, laying in Cadiz bay.

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Darby, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the Britannia, at St. Helens, the 21st May, 1781.

I inclose the account given by a Swede, spoke with yesterday.

C.

Intelligence received by Captain Peyton, of his Majesty's ship Cumberland, from a Swedish ship, bound from Cadiz to Stockholm, on the 20th May, 1781.

The master of the Swede says, that the Spanish fleet, after cruising three months, returned to Cadiz on the 6th of April last, while he was there, consisting of thirty-three sail of the line, six frigates, and three cutters.

That he sailed the 20th of April, from Cadiz; the whole of the Spanish fleet were then there: no talk of sailing: no French men of war among them; but there were six American vessels, not exceeding fourteen guns.

Extracts of such parts of Vice Admiral Darby's instructions on his sailing with the fleet in July as relate to his endeavouring to prevent the junction of the French and Spanish squadrons, dated 21st June, 1781.

Whereas the homeward-bound convoy from Jamaica was off Tory Island the 1st instant, on its way round the North coast of Scotland; and whereas from intelligence we have received there is reason to believe that Monsieur de la Motte Piquet has not sailed from Brest, as was originally intended, but is still waiting there for a large reinforcement of ships of the line, before he proceeds

proceeds to sea. You are hereby required and directed to return immediately with the squadron under your command off Scilly, and cruize between those islands and the Lizard, until joined by the ships named in the margin, or so many of them as, with those now with you, will make up eighteen sail of the line; when you are to proceed off Brest, and use your best endeavours to prevent the enemy's ships in that road from getting out, or any others from joining them from Rochfort, Toulon, or elsewhere, until you receive further order.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Stephens to Vice Admiral Darby, respecting his instructions of the 21st June, 1781, dated 12th July, 1781.

“ To carry into execution the instructions you are under, attending diligently to the several important objects pointed out to you in those instructions; but to consider the bringing the French fleet, under the command of Mons. De Guichen, to a battle, as the principal object of your attention.

Admiralty-Office, 6th February, 1782.

Extracts from Vice Admiral Darby's letters to Mr. Stephens, as contain his reasons for leaving his station in August 1781, with extracts, and a copy of Mr. Stephens's answers.

Extract of a letter from Vice Admiral Darby to Mr. Stephens, dated on board his Majesty's ship Britannia, 17th August, 1781.

Be pleased to acquaint my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that the master of a brig, brought me last night the account (which his journal confirmed) That on Tuesday last at half past twelve, being lat. 47 deg. 31 min. lon. 10 deg. 21 West from London, he was brought to by a frigate under Spanish colours, she belonged to a large fleet of ships of near ninety sail, forty of which at least were of the line; the wind then was N. by W. or N. N. W. and they standing to the N. E. upon a wind, which seems to indicate that they were intended for the English Channel. In consequence of which I have consulted with Rear Admiral Ross, and Commodore Elliot; the result is to make the best of my way up the Channel with the squadron under my command, to make Ushant, keeping on the southern side of the Channel, and haul over to the English shore so as to make Portland, bearing N. E.

Admiralty-Office, 6th Feb. 1782.

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Darby, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board his Majesty's ship the Britannia, in Torbay, the 25th August, 1781.

My last to you, was by the Defiance armed brig; you will inform my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, since that time I have not been able to procure any kind of intelligence concerning the combined fleets of the enemy. I proceed up Channel agreeable to my former letter.

Last night we had some very heavy squalls of wind, in which the Queen lost her main-yard, and the Courageaux sprung her fore-yard, with several other accidents to the squadron. There being a prospect of its continuing to blow, have thought it proper to consult with Rear-Admiral Ross, and Commodore Elliott, the most proper step to be taken, which is to anchor
here

here with the Squadron, to prevent more accidents, and being drove to the eastward of this place; I have left the *Juno* frigate off the Start, and sent the *Alarm* off Portland, in case their Lordships should have sent any dispatches that way.

I mean to stay here, provided there is no shift of wind, for their Lordships further commands.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Stephens, to Vice-Admiral Darby, dated 27th August, 1781.

I received only yesterday morning, by Lieutenant Cadman, your dispatches of the 17th instant, giving an account of the intelligence you have received from the master of a brig, of a large fleet, consisting of, at least forty line of battle ships, being seen on Tuesday, the 14th instant, in lat. 47. 31. long. 10. 21. standing to the N. E. which, indicating their being intended for the English Channel, had determined you to make the best of your way up Channel, with the Squadron under your command; and at near 12 o'clock last night, I received by Lieutenant Tyler, your dispatch of the 25th inst. giving an account of your arrival with the Squadron in Torbay; I lost no time in laying the same before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, who, in return, command me to acquaint you, that, from the general tenor of the advices received of the combined fleet, which sailed from Cadiz on the 1st ult. there is no reason to doubt its having bent its course towards Gibraltar, with a view, it was supposed, to attack that place; but from the latest accounts received, it now seems the armament is destined against Minorca; part of the fleet having passed through the Straights, and the remainder left to cruise, to prevent any succours being sent from England. There is one letter indeed (as you will see by the inclosed extracts) which says, the combined fleet was expected to cruise on the French coast, and in the Channel; but there are no accounts from any other quarter that corroborate it. From this view of the intelligence that has been received, their Lordships cannot give credit to the account delivered to you by the master of the brig, more especially as it does not seem to them likely, that the combined fleet could have come from Cadiz, or the Straights mouth, so far to the northward as he describes, without been seen by some of the ships of your Squadron; or that, if it was steering the course he mentioned on the 14th instant, it should not have been seen or heard of since. And therefore, as you have already been apprized that the Jamaica fleet (supposed to be the most valuable one that ever came from thence) was to sail the beginning of July, and may consequently be very soon expected on our coast; I have it in command from their Lordships, to signify their directions to you, to put to sea again, with the Squadron under your command, as expeditiously as possible, and cruise on such station as you shall judge most proper for the protection of the said Jamaica fleet; accompanying it, when you join it, as far as shall be judged necessary for its security; and sending some of your frigates with that part of it which is bound into St. George's Channel, to see the ships in safety to the respective ports of their destination.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Stephens to Vice-Admiral Darby, dated 29th August, 1781.

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having this day received some advices, in which among other things, mention is made of a large convoy having sailed from the Isle of Rhé the 9th instant, I am commanded by their Lordships to send you the inclosed extract of the said advices for your information, and to acquaint you that they think it very probable that the

convey above-mentioned was the fleet seen the 14th instant, of which the brig gave you the account mentioned in your letter of the 17th.

C.

The transports having finished to take the troops, and every thing on board, sailed on the 9th of August from the Isle of Rhé, with the escort I sent you an account of, the number of vessels about one hundred sail, with the ships for the East-Indies, and other settlements, and some American vessels.

Admiralty-Office, 31st August, 1781.

Copy of a letter from Mr. Stephens to Vice-Admiral Darby.

Sir,

I have received and communicated to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, your letters of the 29th instant; and I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction to you, notwithstanding former orders, to remain in Torbay with the Squadron under your command, until you shall have received more authentic accounts of the fleet mentioned in the advices, which they understand from Lord Shulldham he has transmitted to you.

It is their Lordships direction, that you take his Majesty's ship the Recovery under your command, and also the Minerva, when she returns from reconnoitring the above-mentioned fleet, upon which service she has been sent by Lord Shulldham.

If you are satisfied from the reports that will be brought by the ships which his Lordship has sent to reconnoitre the above fleet, and which he will communicate to you, that it is really the combined fleet of France and Spain, it is their Lordships further direction, that you detach two or more frigates to cruize on different stations, such as you shall judge most likely for falling in with the homeward-bound convoys expected from Jamaica and the Leeward Islands; instructing the commanders of the said frigates to apprise the commanding officers of those convoys of their danger, and to recommend it to them to proceed round the north of Ireland and Scotland, sending into Leith for intelligence, if they do not fall in with any frigates off the Orkneys, or the north of Scotland, and governing themselves by such intelligence as they may gain in proceeding on to the Nore, or putting into Leith, or some other port to the northward; for further orders from whence they are to send to me, for their Lordships information, an account, by express, of their arrival and proceedings.

Their Lordships have recommended to Lord Shulldham to dispatch the Quebec and Cerberus, if there shall be occasion to procure further intelligence, or to employ them on any other service he shall judge necessary in the present critical juncture, transmitting to you all such intelligence as he may obtain relative to the above fleet; and they have further recommended it to him to use every possible exertion to get the Hercules and Dublin into the Sound, and to prepare them for the sea, directing their commanders to hold themselves in constant readiness for sailing.

Their Lordships have directed Vice-Admiral Evans to send the Arrogant immediately to Torbay, directing her captain to put himself under your command. It is therefore their directions, that you take him and the said ship under your command accordingly, until you receive further orders.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

PHILIP STEPHENS.

Admiral Darby, Torbay.

Copy of a letter from the Mayor of Bristol to Mr. Stephens, upon the subject of the combined fleets.

Sir,

In consequence of certain intelligence received here this morning, by express from Lord Shuldhham, that the combined fleets were lately seen in the Channel, and are now supposed to be off Scilly, the merchants are greatly alarmed, and have applied to me to request their Lordships will be pleased to take proper measures for protecting the homeward bound Jamaica and Leeward island fleets; and have suggested, that if the Arethusa, now lying in this port ready for sailing, was to be dispatched for the purpose of giving information of their danger, very good consequences might accrue from it: which proposition I humbly submit to their Lordships consideration.

I have the honour to be,

Council-House,
Bristol, 27th Aug. 1781.

Sir,

Your very obedient servant,
William Miles, Mayor.

Philip Stephens, Esq;

Copy of a letter from Mr. Stephens to the Mayor of Bristol, dated 28th August, 1781.

Sir,

I have received, and read to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, your letter of yesterday, in consequence of the information you had received of the combined fleet having been seen in the Channel; and in return, I am commanded to acquaint you, that their Lordships have reason to conclude, that the intelligence upon which the afore-mentioned information was given, has been without any foundation.

The fleet under the command of Vice-Admiral Darby has put into Torbay, in order to take on board such refreshments as they were in want of, but will return to sea, without loss of time, to cruize for the homeward bound Jamaica and Leeward Island fleets; the protection of which, is one of the great objects of his instructions.

I am, &c.

Extract of instructions from the Lords of the Admiralty to Vice-Admiral Darby, dated 7th September, 1781.

Whereas it appears, by a copy of a letter from Captain Caldwell, of his Majesty's ship Agamemnon, to Vice-Admiral Lord Shuldhham, dated the 31st past, that he had fallen in with the combined fleet of France and Spain, within about thirty leagues of the Lizard; which, according to his calculation, might consist of from forty-four to forty-seven ships of the line, besides frigates and smaller vessels; which account nearly agrees, in point of numbers, with what is contained in a list which the Earl of Hillsborough had received of the French and Spanish ships which sailed from Cadiz the latter end of July last; copies of which letter and list, are transmitted to you in our Secretary's letter of this date. And whereas there is reason to believe, that the said fleets are cruising with a view to intercept the homeward bound trade of his Majesty's subjects, which may be soon expected from the Leeward Islands and Jamaica; or with an intention to make a descent upon Ireland, or both: you are, in pursuance of his Ma-

jeſty's pleaſure, ſignified to us by the ſaid Earl, hereby required and directed to obſerve the following inſtructions.

You are to put to ſea from Torbay the firſt moment wind and weather ſhall permit, with ſuch force as you ſhall then have with you, and without waiting for any further reinforcement.

You are to endeavour to get fight of the combined fleets.

As their ſuperiority is ſo great, you are to avoid an engagement with them; which your copper bottom ſhips, and the ſuppoſed foulneſs of the Spaniſh ſhips, will enable you to do. But, in caſe you ſhall find the enemy ſo far weakened, by having made detachments, or by other ſeparation of their ſhips, as ſhall afford you an opportunity of attacking them with probability of ſucceſs, you are to avail yourſelf of ſuch opportunity.

You are to conſider the protection of the Leeward Iſlands and Jamaica homeward bound fleets, and the prevention of a deſcent upon Ireland, as your principal objects.

The King having the fullreſt reliance upon your bravery, ability, and experience, is pleaſed to leave the meaſures of obtaining thoſe objects, whether by attack or diverſion, to your judgment and determination.

Copy of an order from the Lords of the Admiralty to Vice-Admiral Darby, dated 28th September, 1781.

By the Commiſſioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain and Ireland, &c.

Intelligence having been received that the combined fleets of France and Spain are gone back to Breſt and Cadiz; that the Leeward Iſland fleet is arrived ſafe in Ireland; and that the fleet from Jamaica is not expected for a conſiderable time; and it having been judged expedient, under all thoſe circumſtances, that the Squadron under your command ſhould be ordered into port to reſit, for ſuch ſervice as may be required. You are, in purſuance of the King's pleaſure, ſignified to us by the Earl of Hillsborough, one of his Maſteſty's Principal Secretaries of State, hereby required and directed to return immediately with the Squadron under your command to Spithead, accordingly; remaining there until you receive further order, and ſending to our Secretary an account of your arrival and proceedings.

Given under our hands the 28th September, 1781.

To George Darby, Eſq;
Vice-Admiral of the White,
&c. &c. &c. at ſea.

SANDWICH,
LISBURN,
RAMBER GASCOYNE.

By command of their Lordſhips,
PHILIP STEPHENS.

Original, by the Porto-ſloop.
Duplicate, Griffin or Rambler cutter.
Triplicate, by the Aurora.
Quadruplicate, by the Aſtea.

Copy of a letter from Mr. Stephens to Vice-Admiral Darby, dated 22d October, 1781.

Sir,

I am commanded by my Lords Commiſſioners of the Admiralty to ſignify their direction, that you return into port immediately on receipt hereof, with the whole of his Maſteſty's ſhips under your command, in order to
their

their being refuted for sea with all possible expedition ; directing such of them as you shall think proper, to proceed to Plymouth ; and repairing yourself with the rest to Spithead, for that purpose.

I am, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

Philip Stephens.

Vice-Admiral Darby, at sea.

By the Seaford, from whose Captain the Vice-Admiral appears to have received it on the 1st November.

Extracts from Vice-Admiral Darby's letter to Mr. Stephens, as contain the state and condition of the ships under his command, on their return from their cruize in November 1781.

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Darby to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the Britannia off Cape Clear, the 19th October 1781.

Be pleased to acquaint my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that the Royal George, Foudroyant, and Emerald, make a disagreeable and inconvenient quantity of water, particularly about their bows, and which will certainly require their being taken into dock ; as will the Ambuscade, whose wants cannot be repaired afloat. The Dublin has lost her bowsprit, otherwise our accidents have been only in the smaller way ; but, according to custom, shall have a great demand for sails.

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Darby to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the Britannia at Spithead, the 6th November 1781.

I have nothing to communicate to my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, but our anchoring here this morning ; and so far as I am able to judge, the whole of the squadron under my command, destined here, is arrived. The ships having come in at different times, cannot send the state and condition of them, but should suppose Sir Thomas Pye will do it.

Information respecting the squadron under the command of Vice-admiral Parker, in his operations against the Dutch.

Vaiffeaux qui se trouvent à la Rade du Texel, 1 November, 1780.

	Con- truit.	Noms des Vaiffeaux.	Canons		Commandeurs.
			Hommes		
1	1764	Amsterdam	66	450	Am. Comte de Byland
2	1759	Nassau	66	420	Cap. Rictveld
3		Batavia	56	300	Cap. de Bentinck
4	1769	Princesse Louise	56	330	Cap. Binkes
5	1760	Nassau Weilbourg	56	300	Cap. Kratz
6	1768	Pfs. Wilhelmine	56	300	Cap. Idsinga
7	1772	Argo	40	270	Cap. Staring
8	1757	Dieren	36	230	Cap. Coerman

De l'Amirauté de Nord Hollande.

Vaiffeaux qui se trouvent à la Rade du Texel, 1 November, 1780.

Con- fruit.	Noms des Vaiffeaux.	Canons	Hommes	Commandeurs.
9	1769 Mars	36	230	Comte de Byland
10	1765 Thetis	26	150	Cap. Spingler
11	1771 Valck	26	150	Cap. Silvester
12	1769 Waakzaamheit	26	150	Comte de Richteron
13	1774 Alarm	26	150	Cap. Muller

Vaiffeaux qui se trouvent devant Amsterdam.

14	1763 Admiral General	76	550	Vice Admiral Hartfink
15	1775 Admiral Ruyter	66	450	Contre Admiral Zoutman
16	1770 Erf Prins	56	300	Cap. Dedal

Vaiffeaux Employés aux Indes Occidentales.

17	1768 Beverwyck	36	230	Cap. Brodt
18	1759 Zwiſten	44	250	Cap. Naumann.
19	1772 Jafon	36		

Des autres Amirautes.

Destination of the Dutch ships of war actually ready or near it, according to the present plan, November 1780.

For the West Indies.

St. Eustatius.

Rear Admiral Crull,

2 of 68 } As they are lately called; for it is to be observed, the
 1 54 } Dutch ships as they have added a swivel, or any sort of
 1 36 } gun, more, have been raised in their rank, though the
 1 24 } ships are the same.

Curacoa.

Surinam.

Essequibo.

2 of 54
 3 36

2 of 24

1 of 24

For Lisbon.

Rear Admiral Count Byland.

1 of 68 2 of 36
 3 54 1 24

For the Mediterranean.

Rear Admiral Binkes.

1 of 54 2 of 36

For Morocco.

For Algiers.

1 of 24

1 of 44

For the North Sea, the Channel, the Texel, and the Ports of the Republic.

Vice Admiral Hartfinck, and Rear Admiral Zoutman.

2	of	76	1	of	54	1	of	36
1		68	1		44			24
						Total	28	

At Helvoetsluys.

1 Guardship of 70.

Copy of Vice Admiral Parker's appointment to the command upon Vice Admiral Darby's leaving the Channel, in March 1781.

By the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

Having directed Vice Admiral Milbanke to repair forthwith to Plymouth, and taking upon him the command of his Majesty's ships and vessels at that port, carry on the duty thereof during the absence of Lord Shulldham, you are hereby required and directed to deliver to the said Vice Admiral, all such unexecuted orders as may remain in your hands; and then to repair, without loss of time, to Spithead, and, hoisting your flag on board his Majesty's ship the Victory, remain there until you receive further orders.

Given under our hands the 15th March, 1781.

SANDWICH,
H. PENTON,
C. F. GREVILLE.

To Hyde Parker, Esq;
Vice Admiral of the Blue, &c.
at Plymouth;

By command of their Lordships,

PHILIP STEPHENS,

Extracts from Vice Admiral Parker's letters to Mr. Stephens, and copies of his answers to the Vice Admiral, as contain information relative to the Dutch Squadron, and their movements, to the Vice Admiral's requisitions, and the Admiralty's intentions of sending reinforcements in time.

Extract of a letter from Vice Admiral Parker to Mr. Stephens, dated at Spithead, the 17th May, 1781.

Should their Lordships determine to send the Squadron under my command into the North Seas, I submit it to them whether the Buoy of the Gunfleet will not be the most proper place of rendezvous for any ship which may be ordered to join me, or for the North Sea pilots that may be procured.

Copy of a letter from Mr. Stephens to Vice Admiral Parker, dated 2d June, 1781.

Sir,

Enclosed you will receive, by direction of my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, copy of a letter, containing intelligence of the Dutch fleet.

from which you will observe the necessity there is of your proceeding to sea, in the execution of your orders, without the least loss of time.

I am, &c.

Phil. Stephens.

Vice Admiral Parker, Downs.

D.

Hull, 31st May, 1781.

Sir,

I have a letter this moment from my friend at Amsterdam, who writes me,

“ The Dutch fleet are out, and am much afraid they will endeavour to attack our outward-bound East country fleet, which I am sorry to hear are yet lying in Leith Roads.”

I presume you will have been informed of this circumstance from other quarters, however, you will excuse this trouble.

I am, &c.

John Stephenson.

Phil. Stephens, Esq; Admiralty.

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Parker, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board his Majesty's ship Fortitude, in the Downs, 3d June, 1781.

I arrived here in his Majesty's ship Fortitude, with the rest named in the margin, time enough to acknowledge the receipt of their Lordship's order of the 31st ult. by this day's post; in pursuance of it, I have taken the Preston and Dolphin under my command.

The Dolphin being a two decked ship, it may possibly be necessary to take her into the line of battle; in that case I shall have nothing under my command capable of repeating signals, the frigates ordered to join me being all appropriated to particular services.

Copy of a letter from Vice-Admiral Parker, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the Fortitude off the shore, 31st July, 1781.

Sir,

You will please to inform their Lordships, that in pursuance of their orders of the 2d instant, Commodore Stewart joined me on the coast of Norway, with the Berwick, Belle Poule, and Tartar, on the 16th instant, and delivered me your letter of intelligence of the same date; but as their Lordship's orders reached him after he had been out eleven weeks on a cruize, these ships had neither water or provisions sufficient for ten days, which made it necessary for me to put into Fleckery in order to supply them.

On the 28th instant I joined in Cattegat, Sir Hyde Parker, with the Baltic convoy, a list of whom I enclose. This evening I received your letter of the 23d instant, by the Surprise cutter, Lieutenant Rivett, acquainting me, that their Lordships had received undoubted intelligence, that the Dutch squadron in the Texel were to sail from thence the first fair wind after the 15th, in order to convoy clear of the Orkneys, six of their outward-bound East India ships, and also the Indienæ, with several American vessels laden with cloathing and linen for the rebels in North America, and then to return to the Texel; and that their Lordships had received information from Lieutenant Rivett, that the above-mentioned squadron had actually sailed on the 18th or 19th instant, their Lordships having no doubt of their having proceeded round the Orkneys, and that they will return to the

the

the Texel. In consequence of this intelligence, I am also to acknowledge their Lordships order signified to me, that when I shall have passed the Texel, that I do immediately send a frigate with the homeward-bound Baltic trade, and with the rest of the Squadron under my command, cruize in such manner as I shall judge most proper to intercept the Dutch Squadron above-mentioned.

In the execution of their Lordships order, I should have had a better prospect of success, if I could have considered myself as warranted to leave the convoy before I had passed the Texel. The winds have been hitherto, since our junction, invariably in our teeth, and with this impediment, our progress has, and will be I fear, very slow; but if the Dutch Squadron are gone to the Orkneys, it is probable they will, before they return, take under their protection, three of their homeward-bound East Indiamen, who are said to have arrived some time since at Drontheim, in that case I may yet hope to be early enough to meet with them.

I have ordered the Surprise and Sprightly cutters to proceed immediately to cruise off the Texel, in order to procure intelligence, and to join me with any information they may gain, if the wind should be southerly to the southward of the Texel; if northerly, to the northward of it, at about seven or eight leagues distance from the land.

The Busy cutter, Lieutenant Cotes, who is the bearer of this packet, has also orders for Captain Dickson, of the Sampson, to take under his command the Apollo and Myrmidon, and to join me on that station without loss of a moment's time.

On the separation of that part of the convoy bound to Scotland, or the northern ports of England, it will be impracticable to furnish them with such a force as I had proposed for their protection. I have ordered the Cabot and Leith armed ships to this charge, the rest will be under convoy of the Tartar and Alert, when I have passed the Texel.

I have ordered the Squadron to be put upon two-thirds allowance of all species of provisions which they are deficient in the proportion of, for six weeks, that being the utmost extent of time they will serve to.

I am, &c.

Copy of a letter from Mr. Stephens, Secretary to the Admiralty, to Vice-Admiral Parker, dated Admiralty-Office, 2d July, 1781.

Sir,

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having received intelligence, from whence it is conjectured, that the Dutch fleet will put to sea in a few days, with a reinforcement, to cruise for the Baltic convoy, I herewith send you by their Lordships directions, copy of the said intelligence for your information. And am to acquaint you, that in consequence thereof, their Lordships have sent directions to Commodore Stewart, to join you with the ships under his command, and follow your orders till your arrival in the Downs.

In case this shall reach you in the Firth of Forth, Captain Napier, to whom the Packet containing their Lordships directions for Commodore Stewart is transmitted, is to deliver the same to you, in order to your forwarding it to him in the most expeditious manner you can; with such further directions from yourself for his immediately joining, as you shall think proper for the occasion.

E

Intelligence, 21st June, 1781.

On parle de faire reſortir aux premiers jours l'eſcadre du Texel, avec un renfort de deux vaiſſeaux de ligne & trois fregates. Elle fera à ce qu'on aſſure compoſée de 20 vaiſſeaux de guerre de l'Amirauté ſeuſ d'Amſterdam; ſans compter ceux qui ſe trouvera dans les autres ports; et on ſe flatte qu'on allant en croiſiere dans les mers du nord. Elle ſera ſuperieure aux forces Britannique de ce coté là.

Admiralty-Office, 23d July, 1781.

Sir,

My Lords Commiſſioners of the Admiralty having received undoubted intelligence, that the Dutch ſquadron in the Texel, conſiſting of the number and claſs of ſhips mentioned in the incloſed liſt, were to ſail from thence the firſt fair wind after the 15th inſtant, in order to convoy, clear of the Orkneys, ſix of their outward-bound Eaſt India ſhips, and alſo the Indian (now called the South Carolina) with ſeveral American veſſels laden with cloathing and linens for the rebels in North America, and then to return to the Texel. And their Lordſhips having received information from Lieutenant Rivett, commanding the Surprize cutter, who was ſtationed off the Texel, and by whom you will receive this letter, that the ſquadron above-mentioned did actually ſail in the courſe of Wedneſday laſt, or early on Thuſday morning; I am commanded by their Lordſhips to acquaint you therewith, and that as they have no doubts of their having proceeded round the Orkneys, (though Lieutenant Rivett ſeems to think they are come to the Southward) and that they will return to the Texel, it is their Lordſhips direction, that you do, when you ſhall have paſſed the Texel, or in caſe this letter meets you on this ſide the Texel, that you do immediately ſend a frigate to England with the homeward-bound Baltic trade; and with the reſt of your ſquadron, cruize in ſuch manner as you ſhall judge moſt likely to intercept the Dutch ſquadron above-mentioned, on their return to Holland; and uſe your beſt endeavours to take or deſtroy them.

Their Lordſhips hope, that Commodore Stewart, with his ſquadron from ſhetland, will have joined you off the Catte gate, agreeable to the orders which were diſpatched to him the 2d inſtant; but if it be otherwiſe, they recommend it to you, to loſe no time in forming a junction with him; and to that end, to diſpatch the cutter a-head, with directions to him to meet you where you ſhall think fit to appoint; taking him, and the ſhips he can readily bring with him, under your command while you are employed in this ſervice.

I am farther to acquaint you, that their Lordſhips have ordered the Sampſon, with the Apollo and Myrmidon frigates, to proceed as ſoon as poſſible to the Gunfleet; and that their captains will be directed to join you without a moment's delay, upon receiving orders from you for that purpoſe, if you can fix upon any rendezvous where they will have a fair proſpect of meeting with you.

I am, Sir,

Your moſt obedient

humble Servant,

Philip Stephens,

Vice-Admiral Parker.—

Abstract of the Dutch Squadron.

1 Ship of	74 Guns.
1 - - -	64
1 - - -	60
3 - - -	50
1 - - -	44
1 Frigate of	40
4 Ditto -	32
1 Ditto -	28
1 Cutter of	20

Copy of a letter from Vice-Admiral Parker, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the Fortitude, at sea, 6th August, 1781.

Sir,

Yesterday morning we fell in with the Dutch Squadron, with a large convoy, on the Dogger Bank, I was happy to find I had the wind of them, as the great number of their large frigates might otherwise have endangered my convoy. Having separated the men of war from the merchant ships, and made a signal to the last, to keep their wind. I bore away with a general signal to chase.

The enemy formed their line, consisting of eight two decked ships on the starboard tack; ours including the Dolphin, consisted of seven.

Not a gun was fired on either side, until within the distance of half musquet shot. The Fortitude being then abreast of the Dutch Admiral, the action began, and continued with an unceasing fire for three hours and forty minutes. By this time our ships were unmanageable; I made an effort to form the line, in order to renew the action, but found it impracticable; the Benfaisant had lost his main-top-mast, and the Buffalo his fore-yard; the rest of the ships were not less shattered in their masts, rigging and sails.

The enemy appeared to be in as bad a condition; both squadrons lay too close a considerable time near each other, when the Dutch, with their convoy, bore away for the Texel; we were not in a condition to follow them. His Majesty's officers and men behaved with great bravery; nor did the enemy shew less gallantry. The Fortitude was extremely well seconded by Captain Macartney in the Amelia, but he was unfortunately killed early in the action. Lieut. Hill has great merit in so well supporting the conduct of his brave Captain. As there was great probability of our coming into action again, Captain Macbride very readily obliged me by taking the command of that ship; and I have appointed Mr. Waghorn my first Lieutenant to the command of the Artois: this gentleman, though much hurt in the action, refused to leave my side while it lasted. Captain Græme of the Preston has lost an arm.

Enclosed, I transmit a return of the killed and wounded, and an account of the damages sustained by the ships.

The enemy's force were, I believe, much superior to what their Lordships apprehended. I flatter myself they will be satisfied that we done all that was possible with ours.

I am, &c.

H. Parker.

P.S. The frigates this morning discovered one of the Dutch men of war sunk in twenty-two fathom water, her top-gallant-masts were above the surface, and her pendant still flying, which Captain Patton has struck and brought me on board; I believe she was the second ship in their line, of seventy-four guns.

Ships names.	Men.			Officers.
	Killed.	Wounded.	Total.	
Fortitude	20	67	87	Lieutenants Waghorn, Harrington and Hinckley; boatwain and pilot wounded.
Bienfaitant	6	21	27	Mr. Palmer, gunner, wounded.
Berwick	18	58	76	Mr. Shipley, 3d Lieut. Mr. Maxwell, 5th do, wounded; Capt. Campbell and Lieut. Steward, marines, wounded; two midshipmen and one pilot, killed.
Pfs. Amelia	19	56	75	Capt. Macartney and Mr. Robert Brown, gunner, killed; Lieut. Hill, Smith and La Niconte, wounded.
Preston	10	40	50	Capt. Grzeme and 3d Lieut. wounded.
Buffalo	20	64	84	Mr. Randall, 1st Lieut. and Mr. Linsey, boatwain, wounded.
Dolphin	11	33	44	Lieutenant Dalby, killed.
	104	339	443	

Report of the damages received by the Squadron, in action on the 5th August, 1781.

FORTITUDE.

Five main shrouds on the starboard side, and five on the larboard ditto, gone; five fore ditto, and two backstays, starboard side, gone; foretop stay and spring ditto; maintopmast stay and spring ditto, and mizen stay gone; fore and maintopmast backstays, and topgallant backstay gone; greatest part of the running rigging shot away.

Mainmast, three shot through; foremast, one shot through and one lodged in it; bowsprit, two shot through; jib bomb gone; maintopmast badly wounded; spare one unserviceable; driver boom gone; spare foretopfail yard unserviceable; six chain plates and dead eyes gone; best bower anchor stock badly wounded; ten shot between wind and water, and a great many above water; all the boats damaged; two lower deck guns, three main deck ditto, one on the quarter deck, and one carronade unserviceable.

BIENFAISANT

The mainmast wounded in two places; maintopmast shot away, part of it gone overboard; maintop-gallantmast, and one of the maintop-gallant-studding sail-booms, gone; mainyard slightly wounded; one shot in the foremast; foretop and foretopfail-yard slightly wounded; mizengaff wounded very much; bowsprit greatly damaged by a large shot; one of the fore-chain plates and dead eyes shot away; the fore channel damaged; one shot through the knee of the head; forty-nine shot in the hull, many of them through and through; port-timbers, port-lids, most of the spare booms and spars damaged, and unfit for their proper use; all the boats damaged, and one large shot through the coppers, has rendered them unserviceable.

Berwick.

Fourteen shot between wind and water, three through the channel wall; one orlop standard shot off; two pieces of gun-deck clamp, and the streak under it, shot through; one port-timber on the gun-deck, five pieces between the ports, shot off; one piece of upper-deck clamp, two pieces of spur-kering, shot off; one piece of shot stuff between the ports on the quarter-deck, ditto six strakes of the poop-deck, cut off with the shot; the bowsprit shot through between the gammoning; foremast shot through, twelve feet above the forecable-deck, in two places, three feet a-sunder; foreyard, foretopmast, and foretopfail-yard, shot through; the mainmast shot through, twenty feet above the quarter-deck, and betwixt decks; mainyard and maintopfail-yard shot through; maintopmast sprung, and shot through; mizenmast, six inches of the after part cut off, about twelve feet above the poop-deck; mizentopmast, and topgallant-mast, and mizentopfail-yard carried away; jib-boom, foretopmast, two fishes, a rough stick, of fourteen inches and a half, shot through; studding-sail boom, two ditto yards, six shot away; all the boats shot through in several places.

PRINCESS AMELIA.

Mainmast, foretopmast, bowsprit, foretopgallant-mast, mizenmast, sprit-fail-yard, jib-boom, and cross-jack-yard, unserviceable; maintopmast wounded, and hull much damaged.

P R E S T O N .

Foremost port in the lower deck, torn by shot; one piece of spirketing, and three pieces of short stuff, between the ports, on the starboard sides, ditto; one piece of clamp, one hanging knee, three pieces of spirketing, five ditto of quick-work, one piece of string, one carling to the bowsprit, on the starboard side; one piece of spirketing, two pieces of quick-work, on the larboard side, shot away on the upper deck; three pieces of clamp, five hanging knees, three pieces of spirketing, three ditto of quick-work, on the starboard side; two pieces of spirketing, two ditto of quick-work, on the larboard side, shot away on the quarter-deck; one piece of clamp on the starboard side, and a rough tree rail on the larboard side of the poop, shot away.

Mainmast, maintopmast, spare maintopmast, one kist for mast, spare main and foretopfail-yards, mizen, mizentopfail-yard, cross-jack and driver yards, the barge, cutter, and long-boat, all shot through; eight shot in the main wales; the post split at the 20 foot mark, by a shot; twelve in the channel wale, six above ditto, and eighteen on the starboard side.

B U F F A L O .

The Clamps, spirketings, waterways, several of the hanging knees, lodging knees and standards, wounded; three shot in the foremast, one in the foretopmast, three in the fore-yard, one in the jib-boom, three in the mainmast, and five in the main-yard; heel of the maintopmast shot away; spare maintopmast wounded; larboard arm of the foretopfail-yard shot away near the quarter, and one shot in the starboard arm; two shot in the mizen-yard; mizen-trussel-trees shot away; mizenmast wounded; driver-boom, and studding-sail booms and yards wounded; about one hundred and thirty shot in the wales, sides, and topides; and boats much shattered.

D O L P H I N .

Several shot between wind and water; fourteen on the bends; upper works much damaged; mainmast shot through in four places; maintopmast half through; main-yard three shot through; maintop and cross-tree much damaged; foremast three shot through it; foretopmast wounded; foretopgallant-mast much wounded; fore-yard shot in the upper part; mizentopmast shot through; cross-jack-yard cut in two; the gaff shot in two; two shot through the driver-boom; spare topfail-yard shot through; bowsprit shot through in three places; ship's sides, and a number of other articles, very much damaged; no spare topmasts in the ship fit for service.

Information respecting the operations in the West Indies, in the year 1781.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Stephens, Secretary to the Admiralty, to Sir George Brydges Rodney, Bart. commander in chief of his Majesty's ships at the Leeward Islands, dated 30th of March, 1781.

I acquainted you in my former letters with the equipment of a squadron of ships at Brest, said to be destined for the West Indies, but as none of them had sailed from that port when the last advices came from thence; the account transmitted to you by Capt. Linzee of the Santa Monica, was very erroneous, the fleet which he saw off Cape Finisterre, and supposed to be on its course for the West Indies being no other than a part of D'Estaing's fleet from Cadiz to Brest, where they arrived a few days afterwards. The

squadron

Squadron which has been so long preparing at Brest is now said to consist of 25 or 26 sail of the line, and to have been ordered to sail under the command of Monsf. de Grasse on the 19th or 20th of this month, five or six of which it was supposed would be dispatched to the East Indies, and the remaining twenty go to the Leeward Islands or Rhode Island, as you will see by the enclosed advices, to which I take leave to refer you.

A.

Intelligence transmitted to Sir George Rodney by Mr. Stephens, in his letter of the 30th March, 1781.

Monsf. De Castriès is gone to Brest to hasten the departure of the French fleet. My intelligence states that this fleet is ready to sail with the first fair wind, that it consists of twenty two sail of the line, to be commanded by Monsf. de Grasse, and if my information be true, is certainly destined for the West Indies.

Escadre que va partir de Brest sous les ordres de M. de Grasse, Lieut. General.

	Guns.		Guns.
La Ville de Paris	110	Le Bourgogne	74
L' Auguste	80	Le Scipion	74
Le St. Esprit	80	L' Hector	74
Le Languedoc	80	L' Hercule	74
Le Cesar	74	Le Glorieux	74
Le Heros	74	Le Magnanime	74
Le Northumberland	74	Le Zele	74
L' Hannibal	74	Le Citoyen	74
Le Pluton	74	Le Artisien	64
Le Diadème	74	Le Vaillant	64
Le Sceptre	74	Le Vengeur	64
Le Souverain	74	Le Sphinx	64
Le Marsellois	74	Le Sagittaire	50

Monsf. de Grasse will not have more than ready by the end of the month, though every endeavour is using to hasten his departure.

N. B. From an accident the above blank could not be *precisely supplied*; but from the former advices it cannot refer to more than twenty-five ships, including the five said to be intended for the Isle of France.

Monsf. de Grasse's fleet of twenty-five ships of the line, three frigates, and three sloops, will be all in Brest road by the 7th of March, but I think will not sail in less than two or three weeks more. They are certainly fixed as yet to go to the West Indies first.

La flotte est toute prête en rade (le 7th Mars) pour partir les 6 a 7. Mille hommes qu'on doit y embarquer arriveront à Brest le 15 et le 16 on les embarquera aussitôt.

Le jour du depart de cette flotte est fixé au 18 ou 19, si le vent le permet.

Dans le liste des vaisseaux qu'on a donné, qui partent pour L'Amérique, Languedoc, Le Cesar, le Marsellois, le Vaillant, & le Sagittaire sont doublés en bois, et Mailletés, le Magnanime n'est pas doublés de tout, et tous autres sont doublés en cuivre on n'a pas encore la liste des frigattes.

de Grasse will sail the 19th certainly, wind permitting, with twenty-six ships of the line, with one fifty; La Motte Piquet stays behind sick. You may decide that the fleet is for America, twenty in number, the other six go to the

N. B. No list of the French fleet having been transmitted to the Admiralty by Sir George Rodney, or Sir Samuel Hood, the foregoing list is laid before the House; but the Admiralty do not warrant the authenticity of it: it was found, with various other papers, on board a French vessel, captured by a Jersey privateer, and transmitted by her owners to this office.

List of the English fleet under the command of Sir Samuel Hood, in the action with Mons. de Grasse, off Point Salines.

Line of battle.

The Alfred to lead on the starboard, } Tacks.
And Shrewsbury on the larboard

Frigates.	Rate.	Ships of the line.	Commanders.	Guns.	Men.	Division.
Lizard to repeat signals. }	3	Alfred	Capt. Bayne	74	600	Rear A. Sir S. Hood's division.
		Belliqueux	— Brine	64	500	
		Alcide	— Thompson	74	600	
		Invincible	— Bickerton	74	600	
		Monarch	— Reynolds	74	600	
	2	Barfleur	Sir S. Hood, Bt. }	90	767	
			Capt. Knight. }			
	3	Terrible	— Ferguson	74	600	
		Princessa	— Sir T. Rich, Bt.	70	560	
		Ajax	— John Symons	74	550	
		Resolution	— Ld. R. Manners	74	600	
		Montagu	— Houlton	74	600	
		Gibraltar	Rear Ad. Drake, }	80	667	
			Cap. Knatchbull. }			
		Centaur	— Nott	74	650	Rear Adm. Drake's division.
Pacahunta } fl. to rep. fig. }		Ruffel	— Sutherland	74	600	
		Pr. William	— Douglas	64	500	
		Torbay	— Gidoin	74	600	
		Intrepid	— Molloy	64	500	
		Shrewsbury	— Robinson	74	600	

Given under my hand, on board the Barfleur, off Martinique, the 8th April, 1781.

Samuel Hood.

Memorandum.—In case any line of battle ship or ships should be away, the ship that would have followed the one absent, is to take her place.

Extract of a letter from Sir Samuel Hood, dated the 4th May, 1781, addressed to Sir George Rodney, and by him transmitted to the Admiralty, so far as gives an account of the action between Sir Samuel Hood, and Monsieur de Grasse, off Point Salines; Sir Samuel Hood not having addressed his letter to the Admiralty on that subject.

Twenty-seven minutes past nine, Sunday, the 29th April, 1781, hoisted our colours, as did the French Admiral and his fleet. At fifteen minutes past ten, made the Shrewsbury's signal to alter her course to windward, she being the leading ship, but soon perceived the wind had shifted, and that she

she was as close to the wind as she could lay. At thirty-five minutes past ten, tacked the Squadron all together, the van of the enemy being almost abreast of our center, and at eleven began to fire, which I took no notice of at this time; the ships in Fort Royal Bay slipped their cables, and got under sail at twenty minutes past eleven. I tacked the Squadron altogether, and repeated the signal for a close order of battle. At twenty-five minutes past eleven, finding the enemy's shot to go over us, hoisted the signal for engaging, and in passing our van and the enemy's rear, exchanged some broad sides. At forty minutes past eleven, the enemy tacked. At forty-five minutes past eleven, made the signal for the rear to close the center. At fifty-five minutes past eleven, finding it impossible to get up to the enemy's fleet, I invited it to come to me, by bringing the Squadron too under their top-sails. At half past twelve, the French Admiral, in the Bretagne, began to fire at the Barfleur, which was immediately returned, and the action became general, but at too great a distance, and I believe never was more powder and shot thrown away in one day before; but it was with Monsieur de Grasse the option of distance lay, and he preferred that of *long shot*. It was not possible for me to go nearer. At one I made the signal for the van to fill, the French Admiral having filled, and drawing a head. At seventeen minutes past one, made the Shrewsbury's signal, (the leading ship) to make more sail, and set the top-gallant sails. At thirty-four minutes past one, repeated the signal for a close line of battle, and finding not one in ten of the enemy's shot reached us, I ceased firing; the enemy did the same soon after, but their van and ours being somewhat nearer, continued to engage, and though the French Admiral had ten sail a stern of him, and three others to windward, he was backward in making a nearer approach.

The merchants ships at this time were hauling in close under the land, attended by two ships of two decks, supposed to be armed *en frigate*, and two frigates. At eighteen minutes passed three, the firing ceased between our van and that of the enemy.

Information respecting the West-Indian convoys in the year 1781.

Copy of a letter from Mr. Stephens, Secretary of the Admiralty, to Capt. Byron, of his Majesty's ship Proserpine.

Admiralty-Office, 21st March, 1781.

Sir,

I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, to signify their direction to you to proceed, without a moment's loss of time, and cruise in the ship you command, two hundred leagues to the westward of the Lizard, between the latitudes of 49 deg. 30 min. and 48 deg. 30 min. for the protection of the trade of his Majesty's subjects; and very diligently to look out for the homeward-bound trade expected from Jamaica and the Leeward Islands; the sailing of that from Jamaica having been fixed for the 15th of last month, under convoy of his Majesty's ships named in the margin, all under jury masts; and that for the Leeward Islands having been intended to come away all the said month, under convoy of three ships of the line and a frigate; and upon falling in with the said convoys, to deliver to the commanding officer of each, the packet you will hereunto receive, bearing his address, and to furnish them with all such intelligence you may have gained, proper and necessary for their knowledge.

It is their Lordships further direction, that you continue to cruize as above directed, until you fall in with the said convoys, receive certain information that they have passed to the eastward, or the exhausted state of your provisions shall make it necessary for you to return into port, when you are to make the best of your way to Plymouth for further order.

If in your cruize you should fall in with any of the enemy's squadron, which you may have reason to believe are cruizing to intercept the above-mentioned convoys, it is their Lordships direction, that you take care to keep to the westward of such cruizing squadron, even though it should carry you beyond the limits of the station hereby assigned to you; and in case you fall in with both those convoys, that you accompany them, if together, or the last you meet with, into port, putting yourself under the command of the commanding officer, and following his orders for your further proceedings.

I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

Philip Stephens.

Copy of Mr. Stephens's letter to the commanding officer of the convoy expected from the Leeward Islands, dated 21st March, 1781.

Sir,

The western squadron of his Majesty's ships, under the command of Vice-Admiral Darby, having sailed on the 13th instant, with a large convoy of victuallers and store-ships for the succour of Gibraltar, which service may probably detain that squadron a considerable time, be the means of preventing its cruizing on the usual station, for protecting the trade of his Majesty's subjects, and induce the enemy to send out, from Brest, a cruizing squadron of superior force to any which can be sent from home, during the absence of the western squadron above-mentioned. My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty have judged it necessary to send out a frigate to give you the earliest information of these circumstances; and have commanded me to signify their direction to you, that instead of coming to the eastward into the British Channel, you alter your course and proceed, with the trade under your convoy, round the north of Ireland and Scotland, as far as may be necessary for the protection of those bound up the River Thames; and then, sending a frigate with them to the Nore, go on with the other ships under your command to the Downs, and remain there until you receive further order; taking care, however, to detach a frigate, at such time as you shall judge proper, through the northern entrance of the Irish Channel, to see the trade bound into that and the British Channel in safety to the ports of their destination; and directing her commander, when he shall have so done, to make the best of his way to Spithead, and to remain there until he receive further order.

I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

Philip Stephens.

Original by the Proserpine,
Duplicate. Juno.

Commanding officer of the convoy expected from the Leeward Islands.

Extract of a letter from Admiral Sir George Brydges Rodney, Bart. to Mr. Stephens, dated on board his Majesty's ship Sandwich, St. Eustatius, 12th February, 1781.

The convoy which I propose to send in a short time, will be extremely valuable, more so, I believe, than ever sailed to Great-Britain, considering its number of ships. I shall give a positive order to the commanding officer of the convoy, to gain the latitude of the Lizard at least 200 leagues west from it, that if their Lordships think it necessary to send an additional squadron for its protection, they may be acquainted with the tract they are to take.

Extract of a letter from Admiral Sir George Brydges Rodney, Bart. to Mr. Stephens, dated on board his Majesty's ship the Sandwich, St. Eustatius, 6th March, 1781.

Commodore Hotham has taken charge of the convoy, and will sail from this road on the 10th instant, at farthest. He has my orders to be extremely attentive to their preservation, and to see them into the Downs.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Stephens to Vice Admiral Darby, dated 10th May, 1781.

As there is reason to apprehend that Mons. La Motte Piquet may have sailed with orders to cruize for, and to endeavour to intercept our valuable homeward bound fleets coming from the Island of St. Eustatius (lately surrendered to his Majesty's arms), and from the Island of Jamaica, both of which may be hourly expected. I have it in command from their Lordships to recommend it to you to order eight sail of your line of battle ships, with such frigates as you may think fit, to cruize on such station, as you shall judge most proper, for the protection of the said homeward-bound West India fleets, and for falling in with, and attacking Mons. La Motte Piquet's squadron, directing the senior officer of the ships you detach upon that service, to cruize for the space of fourteen days, unless they sooner fall in with the homeward-bound trade, or the enemy's squadron above-mentioned.

Substance of the intelligence received from the West Indies, relative to the detention of the Jamaica fleet in 1781.

Extract of a letter from Vice Admiral Sir Peter Parker, Commander in Chief of his Majesty's ships and vessels at Jamaica, to Mr. Stephens, dated 16th March, 1781.

The convoy for Europe were to have sailed the 16th of last month, but having, agreeable to their Lordships order of the 20th October last, directed a court martial to be assembled to enquire into the cause and circumstances of the capture of the ships under convoy of the Ramillies on the 9th of August last, in lat. 36 deg. 54 min. north, and lon. 15 deg. 00 min. west of London, and into the conduct of Capt. Moutray; on that occasion; the court martial met the 13th past, and contrary to expectation, continued sitting till the 26th.

All the homeward-bound trade being assembled at this port, the first division sailed this morning, and the remainder of the ships are to proceed and join the convoy to-morrow.

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Parker, commander in chief of his Majesty's ships and vessels at Jamaica, to Mr. Stephens, dated 2d July, 1781.

The Albion, Princess Royal, Ruby, and Janus, are to sail to-morrow with the homeward-bound trade; the Ramillies and Licorne are to accompany them, and a frigate will look into the cape, to ascertain the force there.

Extract of a letter from Vice-Admiral Sir Peter Parker, commander in chief at Jamaica, to Philip Stephens, Esq; dated on board the Ramillies, Port Royal Harbour, the 27th July, 1781.

The Comet packet having been detained by the Governor on account of public business, I have the opportunity of informing their Lordships, of the safe return of Captain Bowyer, with his Majesty's ships and the homeward-bound convoy to this port, the 21st and 22d instant, in consequence of intelligence he received from our cruisers of the arrival of the French fleet at the Cape on the 16th and 17th instant.

We had reason to imagine, that our convoy had got through the windward passage, and Captain Bowyer informs me, that they were fortunate as far as Cape Donna Maria, but afterwards the current changed, which retarded them till the arrival of the French fleet.

Extract of a letter from Captain Bowyer, commander of his Majesty's ship the Albion, to Philip Stephens, Esq; dated in the Downs, 15th November, 1781.

You will please to acquaint my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, of the arrival of his Majesty's ship under my command, with part of the Jamaica convoy. The first division sailing from Port Royal the 19th of August, and the remainder the two following days.

Copies or Extracts of Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt's correspondence, as relates to the objects of his command from the time of his appointment, and of the instructions with which he sailed in December, 1781, and the intelligence given to him by the Admiralty, relative to the force of the enemy, by the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain and Ireland, &c.

Having ordered the Captains of his Majesty's ships named in the inclosed, to put themselves under your command, and follow your orders for any further proceedings; you are hereby required and directed to take them, and the said ships, under your command accordingly.

Given under our hands the 14th of November, 1781,

Sandwich.
Bamber Gascoyne.
C. F. Greville.

For Richard Kempenfelt, Esq; Rear-Admiral
of the Blue, &c. in town.

By command of their Lordships,
Philip Stephens.

Admiral-Office, 11th November, 1781.

A list of his Majesty's ships put under the command of Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt.

Rate.	N ^o of Guns.	Ships Names.	Commanders.	At what Place.
1st	100	Britannia,	Captain James Bradley,	} Spithead.
	100	Victory,	Henry Cromwell,	
2d	90	Duke,	Sir Charles Douglass,	
	90	Queen,	Hon. Fred. Maitland,	
	90	Union,	John Dalrymple,	} Plymouth.
	90	Namur,	Herbert Sawyer,	
	90	Ocean,	George Ourry,	
3d.	74	Edgar,	Thomas Boston,	
	74	Valiant,	S. C. Goodall,	} Spithead.
	74	Courageaux,	Rt. Hon. Ld. Mulgrave,	
	74	Alexander,	Lord Longford,	
	74	Hercules,	John Brisbane,	
	64	Agamemnon,	Benjamin Caldwell,	} Plymouth.
4th	60	Medway,	Harry Harmood,	
	50	Renown,	John Henry,	
5th	38	Arethusa,	Sir Richard Pearson,	
	36	Monfieur,	Hon. Seymour Finch,	} Spithead.
	36	La Prudente,	Hon. W. Waldegrave,	
	32	Recovery,	Rt. Hon. Lord Hervey,	} On her arrival at Spithead.
6th	28	Tartar,	Robert Sutton,	
	24	Crocodile,	James King,	} On her arrival at Spithead.

By the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain and Ireland, &c.

In addition to our order to you of yesterday's date, for taking his Majesty's ships therein mentioned under your command, you are hereby required and directed to repair, without loss of time, to Portsmouth, and cause the utmost dispatch to be used so far as the same may depend upon you, in getting the provisions and stores of such of them as are at that port, completed agreeable to the orders which have been given for that purpose, and in preparing them in every other respect for the sea; and having so done, hold yourself in readiness for sailing at the shortest notice, sending order to the commanders of those which are at Plymouth, to the same effect, and directing them to hold themselves in readiness to join you on your appearance off that port.

Given under our hands the 15th November, 1781.

Sandwich.

Bamber Gascoyne.

To Richard Kempenfelt, Esq; Rear Admiral
of the Blue, &c. in town.

C. F. Gréville.

By command of their Lordships,
Philip Stevens.

y the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain and Ireland, &c.

Having ordered Capt, Saumarez, commander of his Majesty's frigate 'Tiphoeus', to put himself under your command, and to follow your orders for is further proceedings. You are hereby required and directed to take him and the said ship under your command accordingly.

Given under our hands the 20th November, 1781.

Sandwich.

Bamber Gascoyne.

C. F. Greville.

To Richard Kempenfelt, Esq; Rear Admiral
of the Blue, &c. at Spithead.

By command of their Lordships,
Philip Stephens.

By the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

Whereas we have received intelligence that a considerable armament is preparing with the utmost expedition at Brest, and said to be on the point of sailing, consisting of eighteen sail of the line (including four armées en flute) with a large number of transports, in which ten or twelve thousand land forces are to be embarked, whose destination is uncertain; but generally supposed to be part to the West, and part to the East Indies, and that a great number of victualliers, storeships, and trade, will proceed under their convoy; and whereas it is of the utmost importance to intercept the said fleet if it should put to sea, you are therefore as soon as the ships under your command, or such a number of them as you shall judge necessary, shall be ready, hereby required and directed to proceed and cruize on such station, as you shall judge most likely for intercepting the said fleet, and to use your utmost endeavours to take or destroy it.

You are to send to our Secretary, before you sail, a copy of your rendezvous and private signals, and to send to him also, frequent accounts of your proceedings; addressing your dispatches to Capt. Baines, the Regulating Captain at Falmouth, who will have directions to send them to this office by express: But if they shall contain matter of such importance as to make greater expedition necessary, you are in that case to send them directly to this office, by a proper officer, instructing him to land, at the nearest port he can conveniently reach, and to make the best of his way to town.

You are to continue on the above-mentioned service for the space of one month, from the time of your passing the Lizard, unless from any intelligence you may receive respecting the motions of the enemy, you shall judge it for the good of his Majesty's service to cruize for a longer time, in which case you are to do so, returning afterwards with the Squadron under your command, to Spithead, where you are to remain until you receive further order: sending to our Secretary an account of your arrival and proceedings.

Given under our Hands the 22d November, 1781.

Sandwich.

Bamber Gascoyne.

C. F. Greville.

To Richard Kempenfelt, Esq. Rear-Admiral
of the Blue, &c. at Spithead.

By command of their Lordships,
Philip Stephens.

By express next day at 9 P. M.

Cop

Copy of a letter from Rear Admiral Kempenfelt, to Mr. Stephens, received the 25th November, 1781.

Please to acquaint their Lordships that I have received their orders by express, sent off the 23d November, 1781, at nine o'clock P. M. and shall carry the same into execution as in my power.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Stephens to Rear Admiral Kempenfelt, dated the 26th of November, 1781.

I am commanded by their Lordships to signify their direction that you put to sea from Spithead, with the ships under your command, the moment the wind will admit of it, their Lordships finding by a letter from Sir Thomas Pye, received this post, that they will be all completely victualled by this evening.

And it is their Lordships further direction, that you proceed in execution of your order, without waiting for the ships at Plymouth, calling however off that port, where you will probably find that the Ocean, Hercules, Arctusa and Tartar will be in readiness to come out and join you, but which you are not to wait for if they are not able to join immediately upon your appearance.

From Mr. Stephens to Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt.

Sir,

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having received intelligence respecting a convoy on the point of departure from Amsterdam to Surinam, &c. I am commanded by their Lordships, to send you inclosed a copy thereof for your information.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient
humble servant,

Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt,
Spithead.

Philip Stevens.

F.

8th Nov. 1781. — The convoy from Amsterdam to Surinam, &c. is to depart immediately. It will be composed of two ships of the line, and three or four frigates or other smaller ships of war; and what will render it more respectable, fifteen or sixteen of the merchant ships are armed and equipped in consequence, so that this fleet will fear nothing under a squadron, and to be as much as possible out of danger, it will take its rout by the North.

Extract of a letter from Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the Victory, at Spithead, 27th November, 1781.

I have just received your letter of the 26th instant, signifying their Lordships orders, that I put to sea from Spithead with the ships under my command the moment the wind will admit, and to proceed in execution of the orders I have received, without waiting for the ships at Plymouth, should they not be ready to join me when I appear off that port. The ships here under my command have now all their provisions in; but the Queen and Courageaux have some essential carpenters work remaining which cannot be finished before to-morrow evening; the Courageaux is the security of her chain wales; some sails are not yet finished, but hope will be off to night. I am anxious to execute their Lordships orders, and shall be detained by nothing but what is absolutely essential for a ship going to sea.

Copy

Copy of a letter from Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the Victory at Spithead, the 1st December, 1781.

You will please to inform their Lordships, that I unmoored yesterday, but was forced to remove by the wind's coming to the South; the wind is now to the Eastward of the S. E. we are unmoored, but have little prospect unless the wind should change, of getting out, as the time of the tide is so unfavourable, the ebb running almost the whole of these short days.

Copy of a letter from Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt, to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the Victory, under sail, without St. Helens, 2d Dec. 1781.

The ships of the Squadron under my command, that were at Spithead, are now all under sail, and without St. Helens; the wind at East.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Stephens, to Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt, dated 2d December, 1781.

A letter this day received, containing some intelligence respecting the Squadron at Brest; I am commanded by their Lordships, to send you herewith the enclosed extract of the said letter for your information, and at the same time, acquaint you, that their Lordships will send after you such of the ships of the Squadron as are not able to sail with you, and also the Warrior (now going out at Portsmouth) with all the dispatch that is possible.

Sent in duplicate.

G.

According to intelligence just received, and which comes from a good quarter, Monsr. de Vaudreuil is to take with him a pretty large sum of money, less than ten millions of French livres; as it is not usual for the French to take specie to their West-India islands, this circumstance gives a degree of probability to the information we have repeatedly received, viz. that this Squadron is intended for North America, and is to go thither directly. My intelligence says, that Monsr. de Vaudreuil will not sail before the middle of the month; it does not mention the strength of the French Squadron.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Stephens, to Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt, dated Admiralty-Office, 7th December, 1781.

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having this day received intelligence respecting the number, supposed time of sailing, route and destination of the enemy's ships preparing at Brest; I am commanded by their Lordships to send you herewith a copy thereof for your information.

H.

Intelligence.

The fleet preparing at Brest was not failed, and it was given out that the ships would not be ready till near Christmas, but that was supposed to be done to deceive the English. The ships from Brest were to be joined by two from Rochfort with some transports and merchants, making in the whole hundred sail, of which, seventeen were to be ships of the line.

The whole to proceed as far to the South as Cape St. Vincent; to join the fleet of Spanish men of war. Three of the French ships to go on with the troops to the East-Indies; seven to go with the Spanish ships.

the rest of the troops and trading ships to the West-Indies; and the other seven to return to Brest.

It may therefore be expected, that when the fleet sails from Brest it will keep to the Southward, but if your fleet does so they will not venture to put out.

By the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain and Ireland, &c.

Captain Edwards, commander of his Majesty's ship Portland (by whom you will receive this) being directed to put himself under your command, and to follow your orders for his further proceedings; you are hereby required and directed, to take him, and the said ship, under your command accordingly, and employ them, as you shall judge best for his Majesty's service, entrusted to your care.

Given under our hands the 7th December, 1781.

Sandwich.
Lisburne.
Mulgrave.

To Richard Kempenfelt, Esq; Rear Admiral
of the Blue, &c. at sea.

By command of their Lordships,
Philip Stephens.

By the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain and Ireland, &c.

Having ordered Captain Onslow, commander of his Majesty's ship Bellona (by whom you will receive this), to put himself under your command, and to follow your orders for his further proceedings. You are hereby required and directed, to take him, and the said ship, under your command accordingly, and employ them as you shall judge best for his Majesty's service entrusted to your care.

Given under our hands the 7th December, 1781.

Sandwich,
Lisburne,
Mulgrave.

To Richard Kempenfelt, Esq; Rear Admiral
of the Blue, &c. at Sea.

By command of their Lordships,

Philip Stephens.

By the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain and Ireland, &c.

Captain Sir James Wallace, commander of his Majesty's ship the Warrior, (by whom you will receive this) being directed to put himself under your command, and to follow your orders for his further proceedings; you are hereby required and directed, to take him and the said ship under your command accordingly; and employ them as you shall judge best for his Majesty's service entrusted to your care.

Given under our hands the 14th December, 1781.

Sandwich,
Mulgrave,
C. F. Greyille.

To Richard Kempenfelt, Esq; Rear Admiral
of the Blue, at sea.

By command of their Lordships,

Philip Stephens.

Admiralty-Office, 15th December, 1781.

From Mr. Stephens to Rear Admiral Kempenfelt.

Sir,

I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, that they have not yet received any account of the French fleet being sailed from Brest; on the contrary, a report prevails that an express has been sent from Paris to stop them till further order, on account of your being at sea. It is, therefore, their Lordships direction that, notwithstanding the time mentioned in your rendezvous, you take care, before you leave your station to return into port, to be well assured that they are no longer at Brest, and that you lengthen your cruize according to the intelligence you may receive on that subject.

My Lords are in hopes you will soon be reinforced by the Bellona, Warrior, and Hercules; and that the Portland, which sailed the 13th instant from Spithead, has already joined you.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient

Humble servant,

Philip Stephens.

Rear Admiral Kempenfelt, at sea.

By the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain and Ireland, &c.

Whereas it appears, by the list which accompanied your letter to our secretary of the 14th instant, that, of the French ships of war of the line, which you fell in with on the 12th instant, those named in the margin are intended to return to Cadiz, after seeing the convoy, then in their company, as far as Madeira. And whereas it appears to us necessary, that an attempt should be made to intercept the said squadron on their way to Cadiz; you are hereby required and directed to proceed with the ships of your squadron, named in the margin, to such station as you shall judge most proper, from the intelligence you have already received, or such as you may hereafter receive, for the purpose of intercepting the enemy's squadron.

In case of not falling in with the enemy, you are to continue on the said station till you have reason to believe, either from intelligence, or the length of time, and circumstances of wind and weather, that they have past you, and arrived at their destination, unless the state of the provisions and water of your squadron shall make it expedient for you to return sooner into port; in which case you are to return, with the whole of your squadron, to Spithead.

You are, when you proceed upon the above-mentioned service, to send to Spithead the Duke, as also the Agamemnon, if she should have re-joined you.

In case the Bellona should join you, you are to direct her Captain to proceed without a moment's loss of time, to the Leeward Islands; and, putting himself under the command of Admiral Sir George Brydges Rodney, Bart. or the commanding officer for the time being, of his Majesty's ships

La Bretagne
L'Invincible
Le Majestueux
Le Royal Louis
Le Terrible
La Couronne
Le Lion
L'Indien

Victory
Britannia
Ocean
Queen
Union
Edgar
Courageux
Valiant
Alexander
Medway
Renown
Portland
Arethusa
Monsieur
Tartar
Crocodile
La Prudente (if
she should re-join

and vessels upon that station, to follow his orders for his farther proceedings.
Given under our hands and seals the 18th December, 1781.

To Richard Kempenfelt, Esq;
Rear-Admiral of the Blue, &c. at sea.
By command of their Lordships,
Philip Stephens.

Sandwich,
H. Penton,
Mulgrave.

By the Arethusa; from whose Captain he received them, on the 20th, upon his return to Spithead.

By the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of Great-Britain and Ireland, &c.

If it shall appear essential to you, to keep his Majesty's ship the Duke with you, in order to maintain a decided superiority over the Squadron of the enemy, which you are employed to intercept, you are at liberty (notwithstanding the orders you will receive herewith to send her to England) to retain her with you until you return into port.

Given under our hands the 18th December, 1781.

To Richard Kempenfelt, Esq;
Rear-Admiral of the Blue, &c. at sea.
By command of their Lordships,
Philip Stephens.

Sandwich,
H. Penton,
Mulgrave.

By the Arethusa; from whose Captain he received them, on the 20th, upon his return to Spithead.

Copy of a letter from Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt to Mr. Stephens, dated on board the Victory, at sea, 14th December, 1781.

Sir,

You will please to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that the 12th instant, soon after day-light, Ushant then bearing N. 61. E. distance fifty-three leagues; the frigate looking out to windward, made signal for seeing a fleet in the S. E. the wind then in that quarter; upon which I made signal for the two-decked ships and frigates to chase, and crowded sail in the Victory, and at nine o'clock we could perceive they were steering large to the windward, and at half past ten observed several ships of the line a considerable way a-head, and upon our lee-bow, forming in order of battle; upon which I made the signal for the line, but having a prospect of passing between the enemy's ships of war and a great part of their convoy, I continued a pressed sail, with a view of cutting them off, and succeeded in part, several struck to us, the exact number I cannot acquaint you with, (and am apprehensive, that some which struck were not taken possession of, the evening coming on and it blowing fresh, with thick weather.) By crowding sail to effect this, several of our ships were far a-stern, so that to form a line proper for action, would have been impossible to effect before dark; I therefore tacked to join the sternmost ships, at the same time, making the signal for the order of sailing, to get the Squadron connected; after which, I put upon the same tack with the enemy. At day-light the next day, we saw them to leeward, upon which I formed the line, but perceiving their force so much superior to my Squadron, I did not think it advisable to hazard an action.

enclosed you have a list of their force, in which all the officers (prisoners)

I have spoke with agree in, and which corresponds, as to number force of the ships, with the Victory's and reconnoitring ships observations. I thought it advisable to send information of this convoy to the East-India islands, and have in consequence dispatched the Tifiphone fire-ship, as she sails fast, for that purpose.

I have ordered the Agamemnon and la Prudente to follow the convoy, in a view of falling in with any transports or trading vessels that may have parted from them; they are to continue upon this service twelve days, then return into port.

As soon as I can collect the prizes together, I shall send them in, under protection of some ship of the Squadron.

When we got amongst the convoy, the Triumphant, of 84 guns, who kept with them, in bearing down to join their Squadron, passed close by the Edgar's fore-foot (the leading ship of our line) and gave her a raking fire, which fortunately did not do much execution; the Edgar's conduct on this occasion was masterly, she avoided being directly engaged, by judiciously bearing up as the enemy passed her, and immediately luffed to the wind, and brought her broadsides at right angles with the enemy's stern, throwing in a well-directed fire, which we could perceive very effectual; the next morning we observed the Triumphant in the rear line, with his maintop-mast and main-yard gone, I am, &c.

Richard Kempensfelt.

U. S. The Arethusa and Tartar joined the Squadron on the 6th instant,

Ocean joined us on the 10th; I shall continue the same rendezvous as delivered in to their Lordships, and shall confine myself, as near as I can, to the latitude of Belleisle, on a N. E. by E. bearing of Ushant.

List of the line of battle ships with the French convoy.

	Guns.		
Bretagne	110	Monf. Le Compte de Guichen, (1st)	} Go as far as Madeira, then to Cadiz.
Invincible	110		
Majestueux	110	Monf. Le Compte de Rochouart, (2d)	
Royal Louis	112	Monf. de Beauvet, (4th)	
Terrible	110		
Couronne	84	Monf. de la Motte Piquet, (3d)	} Go as far as Madeira, then to Cadiz.
Triumphante	84	Le Marquis de Vandreil	
Pégase	74		
Magnifique	74		
Actif	74		
Dauphin Royal	70	} Separate off Madeira, with the convoy for the West-Indies.	
Bien Aime	74		
Zodiaque	74		
Brave	64		
Robuste	74		
Fendant	74		
Argonaut	64	} Bound to the East-Indies, with three thousand troops.	
Hardi			
Alexandre		} armée en flûte.	
Lion	64		
Indien	64	} Go to Cadiz with de Guichen.	

Richard Kempensfelt.

An account of ships and frigates employed for the defence of the island of Jersey, in the month of January, 1781.

Rate.		Ships.
3d	-	Notrich.
4th	-	Medway,
	-	Leander.
5th	-	Monsieur,
	-	Colts,
	-	Emerald,
6th	-	Maidstone.
Armed Ship,	-	Royal Charlotte.
Sloop,	-	Kite.

A list of frigates and cruizers employed before the Port of Brest, to watch the motions of the enemy's ships there, from the 1st January, 1779, to the 1st January, 1782, specifying the number of ships and frigates, and dates when so employed.

Dates of their orders.		Names of ships and frigates.
1781.		
March 23d.	-	Lively, sloop.
	-	Cruizer, cutter.
May 5th.	-	Lively, sloop.
30th.	-	Ditto.
December 22d.	-	Arctush.

N. B. Exclusive of the cruizers sent from England, it has been understood to be part of the duty of the Commander in Chief of the Western Squadron, from time to time, to look into the Port of Brest, or to send ships and vessels upon that service, when intelligence of their motions was wanted,

n account of the number of ships of war lately failed under the command of Sir George Rodney, for the West Indies, specifying the time when they were respectively ordered to be fitted for that service, the times they were severally reported to be ready for sea, together with the names of the ships, and the commanders of them at those different periods.

hips Names.	Commanders.	Ordered to be fitted for foreign Service.	When reported to be ready
formidable,	{ John Cleland, to 24 Nov. 1781. John Seymour from that Time.	November	5 December 1781 21
Namur,	{ H. Sawyer, to 20 Dec. 1781. Robert Fanhaw from that Time.	Ditto	7 Ditto 11
Arrogant,	Samuel Cornish,	Ditto	7 Ditto 12
Conqueror,	George Balfour,	Ditto	5 Ditto 12
Fame,	Robert Barber,	Ditto	9 November 28
Marlborough,	Taylor Penney,	Ditto	5 December 21
Hercules,	{ John Brisbane, to 24 Dec. 1781. Henry Savage from that Time.	Ditto	7 Ditto 21
Anfon,	William Blair,	Ditto	7 Ditto 12
Nonfuch,	Wm. Truscott,	Ditto	7 Ditto 14
Prothee,	Chas. Buckner,	Ditto	5 Ditto 12
Yarmouth,	Anth. Parry,	Ditto	7 Ditto 12
Repulse,	{ G. Campbell, to 5 Dec. 1781. T. Dumarefque, from that Time.	Ditto	7 Ditto 14
Flora,	Sam. Marshall,	Ditto	15 Ditto 12
Alert sloop,	James Vashon,	Ditto	28 Ditto

A list of the names of the Admirals, Captains, and other commanders borne for full pay, in his Majesty's fleet, now absent from their duty, with the reasons in their applications.

Names.	Reasons.
Vice-Admiral Lord Shuldham,	On private affairs.
Vice-Admiral Darby,	On account of health.
Vice-Admiral Parker,	On private affairs.
Rear-Admiral Sir John Ross,	On account of health.
Rear-Admiral Kempenfelt,	On private affairs.
Commodore Stewart,	On private affairs.
Captain Dalrymple,	On account of health.
Right Honourable Lord Longford,	On private affairs.
Honourable William Waldegrave,	On account of health.
Right Honourable Lord Hervey,	On private affairs.
Nasmyth,	} On private affairs.
Wright,	
Knell,	

To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses, in
Parliament assembled.

The FIFTH REPORT of the Commissioners appointed to examine, take, and state, the PUBLIC ACCOUNTS of the Kingdom.

UPON the certificate of accounts depending in the office of the Auditors of the Imprest, next to the Paymasters General of the Forces out of office, stands the name of the Right Honourable Richard Rigby, the present Paymaster General of the Forces. In return to our precept, he stated to be in his hands, upon the 28th of November last, a balance of four hundred forty-seven thousand one hundred fifty three pounds eleven shillings and three pence three farthings.

The act directs, That in taking an account of the public money in the hands of an accountant, "we shall consider what sum may be taken out of his hands, to be disposed of by Parliament for the public service." But in an office of so large a receipt and expenditure as that of the Pay Office, through which many millions pass in the year, it was not to be imagined, that a sum in the hands of the Paymaster General upon any given day, could possibly remain long enough in his possession to become a subject capable of such discussion; he must have issued the whole of it, long before we could, in the course of our proceedings, have an opportunity of examining it; and therefore we considered this balance, not with a view to the taking any part of that individual sum out of his hands, but to compare the quantum of that balance with the demands upon it on the day of its date, and to see whether it was not more than was necessary to answer the then existing or approaching claims upon the Paymaster General of the forces, for the services of the army.

That we might be able to form an opinion upon this subject, we proceeded to enquire of what parts this balance was compounded, at what time each part was received, and for what service intended. An enquiry that comprehends the whole extent of the business in this office.

The public money in the hands of the Paymaster General, is received by him, either from the Exchequer, or from the Treasury of Ireland, when Irish regiments are drawn out of that kingdom, and in part paid by Great Britain; or from persons who, upon their accounts being settled, are directed by the King's warrant to pay the balance into his hands.

The present Paymaster General has no money in his hands received from the Treasury of Ireland; all the accounts of the Irish regiments being made up, and their whole pay now borne by Great Britain. The sum in his hands, arising from balances directed to be paid to him, was upon the 1st of February last, eight thousand four hundred sixty-three pounds ten shillings and four pence. The Exchequer is the great source from whence he draws his supply.

As the extensive transactions of the last year would probably furnish us with instances of every species of receipt and issue, we procured an appendix. from the Treasury an account of the several sums issued to the Paymaster General of the forces, from the 24th of December 1779 to the 25th of December 1780, and from thence to the 16th of May 1781, distinguishing the times when issued, and for what particular services.

From

From the examinations of Mr. John Hughson, Clerk of the Debentures in the office of the Auditor of the Exchequer; Richard Molesworth, Esquire, late Deputy Paymaster in North America; the Right Honourable Richard Rigby, the present Paymaster General; John Powell, Esquire, Cashier; and Charles Bembridge, Esquire, Accountant in the office of the Paymaster General: we obtained the following account of the manner of transacting the business in this office, and of the balance in question.

N^o 2.
N^o 3.
N^o 4.
N^o 5, 6.

The supply for the army is granted by Parliament to the King, and therefore no part of this supply can be issued from the Exchequer, without the Royal Sign Manual authorizing such issue. After the supply is granted, there comes from the Treasury to the Pay Office the King's Sign Manual, directing the Lords of the Treasury to issue unto the Paymaster General a certain part of that supply (in time of war usually a million) by way of imprest, and upon account, according to such warrants and orders as either are or shall be signed by the King. This Sign Manual, with the Treasury warrant, and order of the Auditor of the Exchequer made in pursuance of the Sign Manual, after being entered in the Pay Office, are lodged at the Exchequer, and give the Paymaster General a credit there for the sum mentioned in those instruments. To obtain any part of this credit, the Paymaster General presents a memorial to the Treasury, specifying the sum he requires, and for what service. The Treasury, by letter, direct the Auditor of the Exchequer to issue that sum to the Paymaster General, upon the unsatisfied order above-mentioned. This letter being produced, and passing through the forms of office, he obtains from them the sum he wants. When the sum in this Sign Manual is exhausted, another Sign Manual with the consequential warrant and order, is obtained, and in like manner from time to time renewed, until there is occasion for the last sum, which completes the whole army supply of the year; when, instead of a Sign Manual, there comes a Privy Seal, directing the issue of that remaining sum, and including, authorizing, confirming, and covering, the whole supply of that year.

It was usual formerly for the Paymaster General to apply to the Treasury every four months, each time for about a third part of the sum voted for the services of the army, under the general head of subsistence and pay of the forces at home and abroad; but since the year 1759, the practice has been to ask of the treasury, from time to time, for the sums voted under distinct heads of service, and not until the time when the demands for the services are near approaching.

The services are ranged under two general heads, the ordinary, and the extraordinary; the ordinary, are those for which specific sums are annually voted by parliament; the extraordinary, are those, which, though not provided for by parliament, are nevertheless considered as necessary, and therefore paid, in confidence of their being provided for in the succeeding session.

As the service is distinguished, so is the application for it to the treasury. Sums for the ordinary services are obtained upon the application of the Paymaster General himself; those for the extraordinary, are directed into his hands, upon the application of others.

After the supply for the pay of the army is voted by parliament, the Secretary at War sends to the Pay Office the four establishments for the year; which are, the guards, garrisons, and land forces; the forces in the plantations, and the garrisons in North-America and the West-Indies; the forces in Minorca and garrison of Gibraltar; and, the Militia; with the several regulations of the subsistence. The establishment contains the distribution of the whole sum voted, amongst the several regiments, corps, garrisons, officers,

officers, and private men, by the day, and by the year, and the gross sum allowed for each regiment, corps, and garrison. To each establishment are annexed two warrants, the one directing the Paymaster General to make a deduction of twelve pence in the pound out of all he shall issue, called the poundage, and specifying to what services it shall be applied; the other, directing a deduction of one day's pay, out of the payments in the establishment, for the use of Chelsea hospital.

In general, the gross sum allowed for a regiment, or corps, is divided, in the establishment, into five parts, under the description of, the full pay of each officer and private man; the allowance to widows; the allowance to the Colonel, and for cloathing lost by deserters; the allowance to the Captain for recruiting, &c. and, the allowance to the agent. But in the Pay Office this gross sum undergoes a different division, consisting of, the subsistence, the poundage, the hospital, the allowance to widows, the net off-reckonings, the clearings, and sometimes respits.

It is in consequence of these deductions from, and divisions of, the gross sums allotted to different corps, and of distinct sums being provided by parliament for certain services, that the application by the Paymaster General to the Treasury, for money, is made under distinct heads of service. These services may, for the purpose of our enquiry, be distinguished under three heads:

First, Those services for which the whole sum received by the Paymaster General, at the exchequer, is issued by him soon after he receives it.

Secondly, Those, for which the sum he receives, belonging to particular persons, remains in his possession, upon account of the persons entitled, until they, or their agents, apply to him for payment.

Thirdly, Those, for which a part only of the sum he receives, is issued by him soon after he receives it, and the remainder continues in his hands for any indefinite time.

Of the first class, where he soon issues all he receives, are, the returned poundage; Chelsea hospital, and the out-pensioners; the subsistence of the forces in Jamaica and the East-Indies, and of the non-commissioned officers and private men in Africa; the subsistence and clothing of the militia and invalids; the subsistence issued upon account; the stoppages of the officers; subsistence in the West-Indies, North-America, and garrisons of Gibraltar and Minorca; the General and Staff-Officers and garrisons in Great Britain; the net off-reckonings; the allowances to the Colonel, Captain, and Agent; the clearings; foreign subsidies; arrears of the foreign troops; levy money; and all the extraordinaries. Under the head of subsistence of the forces at home, so much of the sum received, as the subsistence actually amounts to, is issued to the agents as soon as he receives it.

Of the second class, are, The reduced officers, and, under the several heads of the garrisons abroad, the General and Staff-Officers, and hospital abroad: so much of the sums voted for these services, as is contained in each warrant for the pay of the officers named in the certificate, remains in his hands until those officers or their agents apply for it.

Of the third class, where he issues a part only of the sums he receives, are, the subsistence of the forces at home; the subsistence of the non-commissioned officers and private men of the British forces in the West-Indies and North-America, and of the foreign troops; the garrisons abroad; and, the General and Staff-Officers and hospital abroad. Besides these, there are some other heads of service, to satisfy which, he does not expressly apply to the treasury for money, but pays the demands for them out of what he has received under other heads of service: these are, the allowance to widows; some

some services to which the poundage is made subject by the King's warrant; and, contingencies.

Having thus procured the knowledge of the services, and of the mode of receiving from the exchequer, and of issuing money for each service; it remained, in order to find out the component parts of this balance, to compare the sums received for these services, with the sums issued, and see what remained in the hands of the Paymaster General under each head: but the manner in which the accounts in this office are now, and have been kept from time to time immemorial, render such an investigation hardly practicable.

When the Paymaster General passes an account before the auditor of the imprest, he charges himself therein, with the money he has received out of the exchequer, during the period of that account, in one gross sum; he verifies the charge by the imprest roll, which specifies the sums he has received in each memorial, and the terms in which he received them, but not for what services; all that is required of him is, to render an account for what services he has expended the sum imprested to him: to do this consistently with order and method, his payments must be arranged under distinct heads of service; but there is no necessity for making the like arrangements of his receipts, it would only occasion the entry of a variety of articles in his charge, instead of one, which one, answers full as well all the purposes of passing his accounts. With a view to this, is formed the plan upon which his books are kept; the accounts of his payments are under separate and distinct heads of service, but he has only one cash account; though in one memorial to the treasury, he often asks for several sums, under various distinct heads of service, yet he enters the receipt in his cash-book, as one entire sum received that day at the exchequer, and carries it as one sum to the King's account current in his ledger: to have found out, therefore, the savings in his hands, under any one head of service, he must have examined every memorial presented by him to the treasury for the thirteen years he has been in office, and have extracted from thence, and collected together, all the sums he has received for that service; in order to compare them with the issues. And here too arose another difficulty:—In this office, a payment for any service made in a subsequent year, is entered in the account of that year in which the sum was voted for that service, unless such account is made up, and then it is entered in the next open year's account; hence these accounts are usually kept open, until they are ready to be passed by the auditors of the imprest; which time not being yet come for the accounts of the Paymaster General in office, not one of his ledgers are yet made up; he could not therefore have given us the issues for any one service, without making up the account of that service, in every year's ledger, since he has been in office.

Thinking ourselves by no means warranted to take up the time, and perhaps impede the current business of this office, at so busy and important a period, by employing them in so laborious, and, unless for this particular purpose, so useless a task; we had recourse to such other circumstances in evidence before us, as might lead us to a decision upon the point we are pursuing.

From the arrangement we have made of the sums received by the Paymaster General from the Exchequer, it appears, that the balance in his hands cannot consist of any sums comprehended in the first class; because of them he very soon issues all he receives: Nor is it probable, that sums in the second class can constitute any very considerable part of it; because it is not to be presumed, that officers of any denomination will suffer their pay

to continue long without applying for it, either by themselves or their agents.

A continual receipt and issue, implies a balance continually in hand; there must be the like continual balance where there are intervals between the receipt and issue, and a fresh supply always comes in before the issue, as in the case of every Bank: But our enquiry is after a sum more permanent; a sum that remains long unapplied to any service, and which, if otherwise disposed of, would occasion no interruption in the regular course of paying the army services; for such a balance, in the hands of the Paymaster General, we must look amongst the sums for the services named in the third class, where he issues less than he receives.

Under the denomination of subsistence for the forces at home, he receives more than that subsistence amounts to, with an intent of procuring thereby a fund for certain payments not specifically applied for by him, and therefore otherwise unprovided for: He receives subsistence upon the full establishment of the non-commissioned officers and private men of the British forces in North America and part of the West Indies, and of the foreign troops; but as these regiments must be incomplete, and the Deputy Paymasters there issue subsistence according to the strength only of the regiment, he does not remit to them the whole he receives, but so much only as, from the last accounts they send him of the state of the balances in their hands, he judges will be sufficient to enable them to carry on the public service. This unissued subsistence of the British forces in the West Indies and North America continues in his hands till the accounts of the several regiments are made up, when it falls into the clearings, and is issued to the agents; but this is not till fifteen or sixteen months after they become due. The unissued subsistence of the foreign troops remains with him till their arrears are paid to the agents; which time seems, from the account of the issues received from the Treasury, generally to be about two years after they are due.

He receives the whole sums voted for garrisons, staff, and hospital abroad; but the officers in these departments, named in the certificates from the War Office, do not exhaust the whole sum voted.

Hence arises a fund composed of these savings, out of which he issues for certain services, and defrays certain expences, without making any specific application for them to the Treasury; these are, the allowance to widows; some of the payments to which the poundage is made applicable by the King's warrants; and, the miscellaneous head of contingencies.

To demands for these services, and to no other that we can discover (except such claims for the pay of the general and staff officers, and officers of the garrisons and hospitals abroad, and of the reduced officers, as remained unsatisfied) was this balance liable on the day of its date. What then was the amount of these demands at that time? Nothing had been issued for the allowance to widows in the year 1780; for enough remained of former receipts, in the hands of the Paymaster of the widows pensions, to carry on that service; and therefore this balance was not liable to be reduced by any issue under the head of allowance to widows. We could not have the accounts of the payments out of the poundage and hospital, and for the contingencies in the year 1780, because some of the warrants had not been produced for payment, and therefore the accounts could not be made up; but finding, that where the establishments are nearly the same, there is no considerable difference between the payments made, upon these two heads,

No 7. in one year and another; we applied to the Pay Office for an account of the payments made by the Paymaster General, out of the deductions of twelve pence in the pound, and one day's pay; and for an

account of the payments made by him for the contingent expences of his Majesty's forces, for the last year, in which these accounts were made up at the office. The accounts transmitted to us, pursuant to this requisition, are of the year 1778; and as they, probably, do not vary much from those of the year 1780, they will shew us, with sufficient accuracy, the amount of the demands for these two heads of service upon the balance now before us. The payments out of the poundage and one day's pay, consist of salaries to officers, Exchequer fees, returned poundage, and Chelsea Hospital; the whole amount of which, for this one year, is One hundred Fourteen thousand Two hundred Sixty-five pounds Ten shillings and Two pence. The articles of Exchequer fees, returned poundage, and Chelsea Hospital, though placed to this account, are not demands upon this balance. The Exchequer fees for every sum, are always paid at the Exchequer out of the sum, at the time it is received; the Paymaster General debits his cash with the whole sum he applies for, and credits it for the fees; and therefore the only alteration made in his cash, is an increase by the sum he asks, deducting the Exchequer fees. The other two services being applied for under their specific heads, he receives a sum with one hand, and issues it with the other; and therefore these three articles, amounting to Ninety-seven thousand Nine hundred and Twelve pounds Seven shillings and Six pence, being deducted from the total, leaves the sum of Sixteen thousand Three hundred Fifty-three pounds Two shillings and Eight pence only, as a charge upon this balance; which sum, consisting chiefly of salaries, for the most part paid quarterly, soon after they become due, leaves claims to a very small amount indeed to be satisfied out of this balance.

The contingent expences consist of a variety of articles, amounting to twenty-four thousand nine hundred and fourteen pounds nineteen shillings and eight pence; this account never either much exceeds, or comes much under, twenty-four thousand pounds, the sum voted for the contingencies upon the establishment at home and abroad; for so much of these payments as exceed the sum voted, are carried to the account of extraordinaries. These articles being paid some quarterly, some half-yearly, and some yearly, no very considerable part of them can probably remain unpaid at the end of the eleventh month of that year, and cannot therefore be a charge upon this balance on the 28th of November 1780: From hence it follows, that, supposing the amount of the claims for these services in 1780, not to exceed their amount in 1778, the claims for these services upon this balance, upon the 28th of November 1780, was so much only of the sums of sixteen thousand three hundred fifty-three pounds two shillings and eight pence, and twenty-four thousand nine hundred fourteen pounds nineteen shillings and eight pence; making together forty-one thousand two hundred sixty-eight pounds two shillings and four pence; as had not been applied for, and satisfied, during the first eleven months of that year; and therefore, we think ourselves well grounded in an opinion, that the sum of four hundred forty-seven thousand one hundred fifty-three pounds eleven shillings and three pence three farthings, in the hands of the Paymaster General of the Forces, upon the 28th of November last, was greatly more than was necessary to answer the claims upon him at that time for the service of the army.

But our inquiry did not rest here; it concerns the public to know what proportion the sum, continually in the hands of an officer to whom so much is entrusted, bears to the services of his department; we required, therefore, from the Pay Office, an account of the balance in the hands of the present Paymaster General of the Forces, on the 31st of December 1768, and at the end of each succeeding year, to the 31st of December

N^o 8:N^o 9.

N^o 16. cember 1780, inclusive; and an account of the total sums received and paid by the Paymaster General for every month, from the 1st of January 1780, to the 31st of May last, with the total of the balance remaining in his hands at the end of each month. These accounts shew, that the average yearly balance, in the hands of the present Paymaster General, for twelve years, has been five hundred eighty-five thousand eight hundred ninety-eight pounds; and his average monthly balance for seventeen months, has been eight hundred sixty-nine thousand one hundred forty-eight pounds.

The magnitude of these sums furnishes a strong presumption, that the Paymaster General of the Forces possesses, constantly, a sum much larger than is requisite for the carrying on the army services; and we are confirmed in this opinion, by the state of the balances in the possession of the Paymasters General of the Forces after their resignation, annexed to our last report; by which it appears, that of four Paymasters General, each, upon his quitting the office, took with him the sum then in his hands; the balances they returned to our precepts, above twelve years after their resignations, were even then very large. Lord Holland's balance, the Christmas after he quitted the office in 1765, was four hundred and sixty thousand pounds; in the year 1778, at the time his representatives paid back into the Exchequer two hundred thousand pounds, it was four hundred and fifty thousand pounds; and, upon the 27th of September last, the sum returned to our requisition was two hundred and fifty-six thousand pounds; so that, during a period of fifteen years after he was out of office, it suffered very little diminution from any claims whatever.

From these facts we may infer, that a Paymaster General, at the time of his resignation, be it when it will, takes with him a sum of public money, a great part of which remains with him, unapplied to any public service, until his accounts are passed by the Auditors of the Imprest; and consequently, that he has constantly in his hands greatly more than he wants for the purposes for which it was issued to him.

During the course of our enquiry, certain circumstances in this office attracted our attention, as subjects demanding present correction, and prevention for the future.

The usual course of the receipts and issues in this office, for several years, has constantly put into the hands of the Paymaster General a large sum of public money not employed in the public service, expressly contrary to that sound maxim of prudence and oeconomy, that more should not be issued from the Exchequer for any service, than that service wants. He asks first of the Treasury under specific heads of service, and in the form of a computation; the Treasury direct the issue in the terms he asks it, without knowing whether the service is adequate to the requisition, whether the computation be just, and whether he has not already in his hands full as much as he wants: there is no controul upon him in the Exchequer; the only attention of that office is, to see that the issue does not exceed his credit, and that his credit does not exceed the supply for the army service, voted by Parliament that year. Supposing the constitution of this office to continue in its present form, we think the interposition of some check necessary, to reduce and confine this balance within its due bounds. The Paymaster General can receive nothing from the Exchequer, but by direction of the Treasury; the Treasury, therefore, should have the means of judging upon the propriety and necessity of the requisition; to which a frequent knowledge of his balance is essential; and therefore we are of opinion, that in the first memorial presented every month, by the Paymaster General

of the forces to the Lords of the Treasury, for a supply for the army services, he should always insert the sum total of the balance of public money, for the service of the army, at that time in his hands, custody, or power. What those due bounds are, within which this balance ought to be circumscribed, depends upon a variety of circumstances, of which the Treasury may, upon examination, obtain knowledge sufficient to direct their judgment.

But this usage of office operates still further; it is not confined to the Paymaster General in being only, but he has been permitted after his resignation, and his representatives, in case of his death, to retain the money of the public until the final adjustment of his accounts by the auditors of the imprest. The average of Lord Holland's balance, from his resignation in the year 1765, to the year 1778, when the two hundred thousand pounds were paid into the Exchequer, by his representatives, was four hundred fifty-five thousand seven hundred thirty-five pounds. The average of the balance of the present Paymaster General, from the year 1768, when he came into office, to the same year 1778, was four hundred fifty-three thousand one hundred and eighty pounds; making together, nine hundred and eight thousand nine hundred and fifteen pounds; a sum belonging to the public, in the possession of only two of their officers, for nine years, and the public reaping no benefit from it whatever.

The public good calls for so effectual a correction of this evil, as to prevent it from ever happening for the future. As there should be a check upon the balance of a Paymaster General whilst he is in office, it is equally expedient, that he should retain his balance as short a time as possible after his resignation; that he should pay it over to his successor, and the subsequent business be carried on by him, at least as much of it as can be transacted by him without causing confusion or delay. According to the present course of business in this office, upon the resignation of a Paymaster General, his accounts of the year's establishment are carried on to the 24th of June; or 24th of December, preceding or subsequent to his resignation, as is most convenient to the public service; when it is subsequent, he receives from the Exchequer, though out of office, his proportion of the supply of the year to that time, and applies it in discharge of the demands upon the service, which accrued down to that period; but of these demands, some do not come in a course of payment, others are not applied for till some time after they are due; neither the nett off-reckonings nor the clearings, which are the last payments on account of a regiment, are discharged till fifteen or sixteen months after they become due; the general, staff, and reduced officers, do not all apply immediately for their pay; warrants for contingencies are frequently not produced until several months after they are payable; and the Paymaster General has deputies in various parts of the world, whose accounts he must have time to adjust; it is therefore convenient, and prevents trouble to the office, that his business should be carried on, and so much of the public money, as is necessary for that purpose, continue in his hands for some short time afterwards; and if the balance be confined within its proper bounds whilst he is in office, the interest of the public will not be materially affected by the detention of a moderate balance, for a few months after his resignation.

If claimants for sums directed, but not applied for, in the time of the predecessor, must, according to the present forms of office, have recourse to the Treasury for new warrants, those forms are inconvenient, and should be altered; the successor should be empowered to pay such demands, under the

authority given to the predecessor, without putting claimants to the trouble and expence of a second application.

Was the Paymaster General to retain his balance until his accounts are finally adjusted, the public would be kept out of their money to a very distant and uncertain period. It is sixteen years since Lord Holland resigned, and his accounts are still in the office of the Auditors of the Imprest unsettled; the present Paymaster General has been in office thirteen years, and the first three years and a half only of his accounts are sent into that office, and in their first stage. The public have a right to be informed how their money has been expended, and as speedily as possible after the expenditure: the evils attending delay are many and obvious, both to the person accounting, and to those entitled to call for the account. Being accustomed to go in one track, and long inattention to this point, in the departments both of the Paymaster General and of the Auditors of the Imprest, added to a great increase of business, have produced long arrears; it requires, and there ought to be, an extraordinary exertion in both offices, to bring the accounts forward, and to introduce and establish that order and regularity in making them up, and keeping them, which should be strictly adhered to in every office of account. To obtain and preserve an accurate and competent knowledge of the state they are in, they should be made up and balanced once a year, to a certain stated time, and as soon as may be after that stated time is elapsed. But the time it takes to complete the payment of certain services, and the manner of carrying on some branches of the business in this office, are impediments to such a regulation, and seem not well calculated either for perspicuity or expedition. There are certain services, for which no specific sums are appropriated, either by the vote of Parliament, or by the distribution in the establishment; but they are paid out of funds compounded of a great variety and number of articles, subtracted from various different gross sums, either voted or allotted for certain purposes: these services are, Chelsea Hospital, the allowance to widows, the cloathing of the regulars, Exchequer fees, and salaries to certain officers. One of these funds is the poundage, which consists of various deductions of twelve-pence in the pound upon almost every individual sum (except the half-pay, of which the deduction is only six-pence in the pound) voted, or allotted by the distributions in the establishments, for the army services: out of this fund are paid, 1st, The returned poundage; that is, this very deduction, thus made, is paid back to certain corps; so that this part of it seems to be deducted for no other purpose but that of returning it back again. 2^{dly}, A part of this poundage is applied towards the expences of Chelsea Hospital. 3^{dly}, The remainder pays the Exchequer fees, and the salaries of the Paymaster General, and of other officers.

The expences attending Chelsea hospital are paid out of two funds, joined together; the one is part of the poundage above-mentioned; the other is formed of the deductions of one day's pay of every person named in one of the establishments, and of some of the persons named in other of the establishments: to form this fund, and that of the poundage, and to make these several deductions, is the business of the Pay-Office.

The allowance to widows, consists of the pay of two private men a company, and is a part of the establishment in every regiment; this comes from the War-Office, but the several articles are collected together from the regimental distributions, and formed into a fund, in the Pay-Office.

The fund for the cloathing is called the nett off-reckonings; and is composed of deductions made in the Pay-Office, out of the sums allotted in the estab-

establishment for the full pay of the non-commissioned officers and private men, in most of the regiments and corps.

One effect of these operations is, that in making up the state of every regiment in the Pay-Office, the sum allotted for its pay in the establishment must consist of six parts; the poundage, the hospital, the subsistence, the allowance to widows, the off- reckonings, and the clearings, and sometimes respits. This state, besides the business it creates in the Pay-Office, must be examined, computed, and signed, by the agent; for he receives the clearings, which is the balance due to the regiment; the truth of which balance depends upon the justness of the calculation of the other divisions: it must be examined too, and computed, by the auditor of the imprest; for the Paymaster-General taking credit in his account for the whole pay of each regiment, and surcharging himself with the total amount of the deductions of the poundage, hospital, and widows, in every year, the Auditor cannot know the accuracy of the surcharge, without an examination of each article that composes it.

To persons accustomed to the course of the office, these computations are easy and familiar; but they certainly must take up time; an object, considering the present state of the army accounts, worth attending to. If, instead of these deductions, certain specific distinct sums were estimated and set apart for these services in the establishment; if distinct accounts were kept of the receipts and payments, under each head of service; if the cloathing of the regulars was voted like the cloathing of the militia, separate from the establishment; if the sum allotted to a regiment should be the actual pay, and the whole of it be distributed amongst the officers and private men, and paid to them without deduction, at such times and in such proportions as shall be deemed best for the service; if every distinct service had its distinct appropriation, which can be easily estimated by the experience of preceding years; it should seem as if this branch of the pay of the army might be carried on in a more simple, expeditious, and intelligible manner.

In public trusts, the possibility of a loss should be guarded against, as much as the nature of the trusts will admit, without any respect to persons, or placing any more confidence in any man than can be helped. The sums that appear to have been intrusted to Paymasters General, are of a magnitude that implies danger to the public; for who can give, or find security for the payment of them? At the head of this class of accountants, stands an instance of an actual loss; the last account that was passed of Lord Lincoln's was to the 24th December 1719, between No 11. which, and the 25th of June 1720, four hundred seventy-three thousand one hundred and twenty-seven pounds, were issued to him from the Exchequer; of this sum it does not appear that any account was ever given, nor have we been able to trace, either in the Pay-Office, or in that of the Auditors of the Imprest, the expenditure of any part of it; neither book nor paper, relative to this account, is to be found in either of those offices. It has been the practice of the Paymasters General, when they went out of office, to take with them the books and papers that relate to their accounts, as their own private property; but as the Paymaster General is an officer appointed to a public trust, his office created for the use of, and supported by, the public, and his books contain accounts of the receipt and expenditure of public money; we are of opinion that all these official books and papers are, and should be considered as the property of the public, and as such, left and deposited in the pay office, for the use and information of posterity.

The regulations hitherto suggested, are upon a supposition that the constitution of this office continues in its present form; but there is a mo

tion, which, if it can be adopted, will effectually remove the power, and therefore the possibility, of loss or abuse; that is, by taking away from the Paymaster General of the forces, the custody of the public cash, and placing it in the Bank of England; this Treasury will then be converted into an office of mere account, and the Paymaster General, instead of being the Banker of the army, will be the instrument only through whom the army services are paid, without having the power of applying the public money to any other purposes whatever. Some judgment may be formed how far this plan is practicable, by comparing the alteration it will make in the great outlines of the business of this office, the receipt, the issue, the keeping the accounts, and the accounting, with the forms now in use. The imprest must be to the Bank; the Bank must make the payments, by means of cheque drafts drawn by the Paymaster General, specifying the warrant, and the service: The Paymaster General must keep the account of these receipts and payments, and the Bank a duplicate; both must join in passing the accounts, the one producing the warrants discharged by his drafts, the other producing the drafts discharged by payment. Under the present constitution of this office, the Paymaster General keeps his cash at the Bank; the Bank receives it at the Exchequer on his account; he never pays in cash, but by his cashiers drafts on the Bank: He keeps the account of all these receipts and payments, as if they were transacted in cash: The warrant indorsed, or the warrant and receipt, or the warrant and regimental pay book, signed by the agent, and receipt for the off- reckonings, are his vouchers: His deputies pay, when they can, by drafts upon the agent to the remitter, who is the Bank abroad, and accountable to the public.

Such is the similitude between the mode proposed and the mode in use; and thus far this regulation carries with it all the appearance of being reducible to practice.

We are well aware of the difficulties that must for ever attend the introducing novelty of form into antient offices, framed by the wisdom of our ancestors, and established by the experience of ages; they are considered as incapable of improvement; the officers educated in, and accustomed to the forms in use, are insensible of their defects, or, if they feel them, have no leisure, often no ability, seldom any inclination, to correct them; alarmed at the idea of innovation, they resist the proposal of a regulation, because it is a change, though from a perplexed and intricate, to a more simple and intelligible system.

To trace this alteration through every branch of the business, to mark all its effects, that it does not in anywise disturb the pay of the army, perplex the accounts, or throw difficulties or delay in the passing them; to point out the steps by which it ought gradually and methodically to be introduced, is a Work of long serious attention and accurate examination; but the appearance this plan carries with it of being practicable, and the advantage it holds out to the public, in an office, that certainly stands in need of some reform, afford us sufficient reason for submitting the consideration of it to the wisdom of the legislature.

Office of accounts,
Surrey-Street,
10th August 1781.

Guy Carleton,	(L. S.)
T. Anguish,	(L. S.)
A. Piggott,	(L. S.)
Rich. Neave,	(L. S.)
Sam. Beachcroft,	(L. S.)
Geo. Drummond.	(L. S.)

A P P E N D I X.

N^o I.

An ACCOUNT of the several sums issued to the right honourable Richard Rigby Paymaster General of the forces, from the 24th day of December 1779, to the 25th day of December 1780, and from that period to the present time (16th May 1781); distinguishing the times when issued, and for what particular services.

Date of Issue.	S E R V I C E S.	Voted Services.	Extraordinaries.
1779.			
27th Dec.	George Browne, for provisions sent to Goree	—	2,055 3 3
31st D ^o	Messrs. Mure and Co, for freight, &c.	—	36,038 16 9
1780.			
10th Jan.	Sundry contractors, for provisions	—	33,364 — 1
11th D ^o	61 days pay of Hanoverians, to 23d February 1780	7,806 6 11½	—
13th D ^o	Bank of England, for bills of Exchange	—	30,323 3 11½
17th D ^o	Advanced subsistence to 11th battalion Lord M ^c Leod's regiment, to 24th December 1780	—	—
	92 days subsistence, to 24th April 1780, to 86th, 87th, 90th, and 91st regiments	9,094 10 —	—
18th D ^o	30 days subsistence of troops at home, to 3rd February 1780	11,368 2 3	—
	D ^o of Militia, to D ^o	79,696 3 8	—
	61 Days Stoppages from the subsistence of the forces abroad, to D ^o	44,042 19 4	—
D ^o	30 Days subsistence of 10 companies of invalids, to 23d January 1780	41,168 12 3	—
	Upon account of subsistence of a regiment to be raised by Major General Rainsford	997 10 —	—
31st D ^o	Towards satisfying arrears of pay to the Hessian troops, for the year 1777	1,000 — —	—
		56,000 — —	—

14th Feb.	To George Brown, for provisions, and S. Martin for Coals	—	—	—	4,171	8	5
16th D ^o	Bank of England, for bills of Exchange	—	—	—	20,885	11	10
22d D ^o	31 Days subsistence of the forces at home, to 25th March 1780	—	—	—	—	—	—
	D ^o of Militia, to D ^o	79,199	5	10	—	—	—
	Subsistence of the forces at Gibraltar	44,175	15	6	—	—	—
	D ^o to the 29th and 38th regiments, 500 l. each	3,000	—	—	—	—	—
	61 Days subsistence of the troops at Minorca, to 24th August 1780	1,000	—	—	—	—	—
	Subsistence of the forces in the West-Indies, to 24th June 1780	3,180	3	9	—	—	—
	61 Days subsistence of British forces in America, to 24th August 1780	5,677	16	8	—	—	—
	Subsistence on account to Humberston's and Fullarton's corps	7,947	8	1	—	—	—
	D ^o Major Holroyd's dragoons	1,000	—	—	—	—	—
	D ^o Colonel M'Cormick's foot	1,000	—	—	—	—	—
	3 Months subsistence in advance to 85th and 92d regiments	700	—	—	—	—	—
	Subsistence, Colonel White's regiment foot	5,581	6	8	—	—	—
	D ^o in advance to 93d regiment	700	—	—	—	—	—
	61 Days subsistence Hessian troops, to 24th August 1780	2,820	4	10	—	—	—
	D ^o Troops of Waldeck, to D ^o	2,121	—	5	—	—	—
14 March	Daniel M'Phail, for pay of an expris boat	1,052	16	5	—	—	—
22d D ^o	To satisfy sundry warrants for extraordinary services	—	—	—	—	—	—
	For 30 days subsistence of the forces at home, to the 24th of April 1780	—	—	—	—	—	—
	For 152 days pay of the 2d battalion of the 73d foot, to the 24th August 1780	70,134	2	8	—	—	—
	For 30 Days subsistence of Militia, to 24th April 1780	6,349	16	—	—	—	—
	For 61 days stoppages from the subsistence of the forces serving abroad, to D ^o	42,901	—	—	—	—	—
	For a bill drawn from Gibraltar, for subsistence of the garrison there	41,867	18	—	—	—	—
		7,000	—	—	—	—	—

335 4 4
210,815 6 10

Date of the Issue.	Voted Services.	Extraordinaries.
1780.		
22d March		
For 152 days pay of the 80th regiment, to 24th August 1780		
122 D°	4,661	6
86th D°	3,780	19
87th D°	3,741	6
90th D°	3,771	16
91st D°	3,780	19
85th D°	2,821	6
92d D°	2,821	6
94th D°	2,820	4
Months D°	—	10
to D° June 1780		
For stoppages of two pence per man per day from the pay of the non-commissioned officers and private men of the several corps of foreign troops in the pay of Great-Britain, for 183 days, to the 24th December 1779	32,604	10
For subsidies to foreign Princes	25,860	5
For Provision Contractors, and to Messrs. Harley and Drummond, to be remitted to America, &c.	—	—
15th April		
For arrears of pay to the troops of Hesse and Anspach, in the years 1776, 1777, and 1778	442,433	1 7
Forundry Provision Contractors	160,000	—
For the bank of England, for bills of exchange	—	—
30 Days subsistence of the forces at home, to 24th May 1780	76,934	18
D° of militia,	43,385	15
61 Days subsistence of the British forces in America, to the 24th October 1780	7,947	8
D° of the forces at Minorca, to D°	3,188	9
D° of the forces in the West-Indies, to D°	5,677	10

Do Days subsistence of the British forces in America, to the 24th October 1780	2,121	—	5
Do of Hessians, to Do	1,052	16	5
Do of Troops of Waldeck, to Do	8,000	—	—
Arrears of Hanau troops, anno 1777	—	—	—
Admiral Edwards, pay as Governor of Newfoundland	—	—	—
Robert Mayne, Esquire, Provision Contractor	—	—	—
61 Days pay of Hanoverians, to 24th June 1780	—	—	—
To sundry persons, for extraordinary services	—	—	—
For subsidies to foreign Princes	—	—	—
For sundry Provision Contractors	32,283	16	1
61 Days subsistence of sundry regiments, to 24th December 1780	—	—	—
122 Do for sundry new-raised regiments, to ditto	5,677	16	8
Messrs. Harley and Drummond, to be remitted abroad	8,016	—	—
To the contractors for home encampments	—	—	—
For subsistence in advance to two companies of the 71st, and one company of the 24th regiments, to 24th December	—	—	—
For subsistence in advance to sundry new-raised corps, to 24th August 1780	6,543	4	8
182 Days subsistence, 1st battalion Lord M'Leod's, to 24th June 1781	3,890	9	10
30 Days subsistence of the forces at home, to 24th June 1780	7,698	12	—
30 Days Do of militia to Do	77,546	10	3
61 Days stoppages from the pay of the forces serving abroad	45,072	3	10
Sundry Provision Contractors	42,337	18	—
To satisfy warrant for militia cloathing	—	—	—
Do sundry warrants for extraordinary services	83,535	19	1
365 Days pay of General, Staff, and Hospital Officers in America, to 24th December 1779	—	—	—
365 Days pay of garrisons abroad, to 24th December 1779	43,312	19	2
182 Days net off-reckonings of his Majesty's forces, to 24th June 1779	19,238	11	—
	143,623	16	11
26th Do	42,070	7	8
27th Do	73,674	18	6
20th Do	549	—	—
2d May	17,178	—	—
Do	7,806	6	11
Do	53,424	9	11
Do	30,263	7	10
23th Do	20,000	—	—
Do	10,000	—	—

Date of the Issue.		Voted Services.	Extraordinaries.
1780.	Towards arrears of Hanau troops, anno 1778	—	—
27th May	Sundry warrants for extraordinary expenses	4,500	15,607 13 9
30th D ^o	Remittance Contractors	—	16,000 — —
31st D ^o	Provision Contractors	—	78,610 4 6
1st June	Remittance Contractors	—	336,414 2 6
7th D ^o	Bank of England, for Bills of Exchange	—	18,188 16 8½
16th D ^o	Sundry Provision Contractors	—	54,548 14 9
21st D ^o	Subsidies to foreign Princes	25,860 5 7	—
	For Chelsea Hospital, for 183 days, to 24th June 1780	58,276 11 9½	7,681 4 —
	Bills drawn by the Deputy Paymaster in the West-Indies	—	—
30 Days	Subsistence of the forces at home, to 24th July 1780	79,625 — 8	—
30 Days	Subsistence of militia, to D ^o	43,618 5 —	—
61 Days	D ^o of the British troops in America, to 24th December 1780	22,103 6 3	—
61 Days	D ^o of Hessian, — to D ^o	24,035 8 2	—
D ^o	of Waldeck troops, — to D ^o	1,952 16 5	—
D ^o	of troops of Anspach, — to D ^o	2,648 7 8	—
D ^o	of troops at Minorca, — to D ^o	3,245 11 10½	—
29th D ^o	To Thomas Wilkinton, for a Bill of Exchange	—	2,343 — 2
4th July	183 Days half pay, to 24th June 1780	41,756 14 3	11,188 2 3
D ^o	Sundry warrants for extraordinary services	—	207,921 15 —
6th D ^o	Contractors, for remitting money to North-America	—	50,000 — —
8th D ^o	Provision Contractors	—	4,500 — —
12th D ^o	Contractor for home encampments	—	43,824 11 3
18th D ^o	Bank of England, for Bills of Exchange	—	17,297 16 3
	Sundry warrants for extraordinary services	—	—

20th D°	Contractor for home encampments	—	—	—	1,300	—
22d D°	Contractor, for remitting money to North America	—	—	—	50,000	—
D°	31 Days subsistence of forces at home, to 24th August, 1780	73,596	10	3	—	—
27th D°	31 Days subsistence of militia, to 24th August, 1780	45,396	17	8	—	—
28th D°	61 Days stoppages from subsistence of forces abroad, to D°	45,121	9	11	—	—
29th D°	George Leonard, for services in America	—	—	—	2,000	—
	Sundry warrants for extraordinary services	—	—	—	30,939	2 9
	Bills of exchange, drawn by the Deputy Paymaster in the West-Indies	—	—	—	11,185	17 4
	Subsidies to foreign Princes	32,604	10	—	—	—
28th D°	Remittance and other Contractors	—	—	—	104,500	—
3d August	Sundry warrants for extraordinary services	—	—	—	46,472	7 6½
14th D°	Warrants for militia cloathing	—	—	—	11,618	14 2
19th D°	Sundry provision Contractors	—	—	—	364,707	5 3
23d D°	Sundry warrants for extraordinary	—	—	—	53,627	7 —
	61 Days subsistence of British forces in North-America, to 23d February 1781	7,947	7	1	—	—
D°	Hessians, — to D°	2,121	—	5	—	—
D°	regiment of Waldeck — to D°	1,052	16	5	—	—
D°	forces in the West-Indies, — to D°	9,641	13	10	—	—
D°	forces at Minorca, — to D°	2,937	11	10½	—	—
	30 Days subsistence of the forces at home, to the 23d of September, 1780	79,552	15	6	—	—
D°	militia, — to D°	43,947	5	—	—	—
26th D°	Warrants to Contractors	—	—	—	22,515	5 —
7th Sept.	6 Months pay of garrisons in Great-Britain, to 24th June 1780	13,987	16	8	—	—
	6 Months allowance of fire and candle for D°, to D°	1,761	2	6	—	—
	Poundage from the pay of the infantry, 6 months, to D°	25,336	4	3	—	—
14th D°	Sundry Warrants for extraordinary services	—	—	—	1,651	7 —
16th D°	Bank of England, for bills of exchange	—	—	—	33,619	— 9

Date of the Issue.	Voted Services.	Extraordinaries.
1780.		
15th Sept.	7,806 6 11½	25,275 — 3
20th D ^o	74,859 14 —	
	45,490 19 —	
19th D ^o	48,500 — —	4,500 — —
21st D ^o	— — —	10,672 6 4
D ^o	1,000 — —	6,032 3 2
9th October	— — —	138,291 8 9.
19th D ^o	79,682 16 10	
	45,023 10 —	
	8,341 15 —	
	4,692 — —	
	3,076 11 —	
	1,000 — —	
	22,450 8 6	
	25,455 13 4	
	1,035 10 5	
	9,483 12 8	
	2,915 10 6	
	16,439 10 —	
	25,986 4 7	
Pay of Hanoverians		
Warrant for extraordinary services		
31 Days subsistence of forces at home, to 24th October 1780		
31 D ^o of militia, to D ^o		
61 Days stoppages from pay of forces abroad, to D ^o		
Contractors for home encampment		
Bills drawn by the Deputy Paymaster in the West-Indies		
Upon account of subsistence of an augmentation to Lieutenant-Colonel Fullarton's and Humberston's corps		
Sundry warrants for extraordinary services		
Remittance, and other Contractors		
30 Days subsistence of forces at home, to 23d November 1780		
D ^o of militia, to D ^o		
122 Days D ^o of 4th, 5th, and 49th regiments, to 24th October 1780		
153 Days pay of 85th regiment, to 24th October 1780		
358 Days D ^o of Isle of Man corps, to D ^o		
On account of subsistence of 97th regiment		
60 Days subsistence of British forces in America, to 24th April 1781		
D ^o Hessians, to D ^o		
D ^o Regiment of Waldeck, to D ^o		
D ^o Troops in the West-Indies, to D ^o		
60 Days subsistence of garrison of Minorca, to 24th April 1781		
61 Days D ^o of troops in Jamaica, to 24th December 1780		
Subsidies to foreign Princes		

	Remittance Contractors	- - - - -	-	-	-	-	—	238,108 16 6
10th Nov.	Do	- - - - -	-	-	-	-	—	11,891 3 6
27th Do	Towards 3 months subsistence, in advance, to 3 regiments	- - - - -	-	-	-	-	5,951 10 11 ³ / ₄	
	31 Days subsistence of the forces at home, to the 24th of December,	- - - - -	-	-	-	-	75,037 4 11	
	1780	- - - militia	-	-	-	-	45,747 13 2	
	Do	- - - to Do	-	-	-	-	149,704 18 11	
	183 Days nett off-reckonings of the forces, to Do	- - -	-	-	-	-	2,586 3 8 ¹ / ₄	
	To complete subsistence, in advance, to 3 regiments	- - -	-	-	-	-	48,187 18 —	
	61 Days stoppages from pay of troops abroad, to 24th December,	- - -	-	-	-	-	31,617 3 7	
	1780	- - -	-	-	-	-	24,627 17 7	
	365 Days clearings of fundry regiments, to 24th Decéمبر 1779	- - -	-	-	-	-	57,922 10 10 ¹ / ₂	
28th Do	Do	- - - of militia	-	-	-	-	—	180,368 12 6
	Sundry warrants for extraordinary services	- - -	-	-	-	-	—	621,702 7 4
	Subsidies to foreign Princes	- - -	-	-	-	-	—	21,964 2 —
	Remittance and Provision Contractors	- - -	-	-	-	-	—	6,375 5 —
	Provision Contractors	- - -	-	-	-	-	—	18,192 1 7 ¹ / ₂
	Bills drawn from the West-Indies	- - -	-	-	-	-	—	48,901 17 7
29th Do	Bank of England, for Bills of Exchange	- - -	-	-	-	-	—	115,247 11 5
30th Do	Do	- - -	-	-	-	-	—	—
8th Dec.	Provision and Remittance-Contractors	- - -	-	-	-	-	57,433 18 9 ³ / ₄	
15th Do	Chelsea Hospital, half a year, due at-Christmas 1780	- - -	-	-	-	-	95,121 18 1	
14th Do	30 Days subsistence of forces at home, to 23d January 1781	- - -	-	-	-	-	44,176 —	
22d Do	Do	- - - of militia	-	-	-	-	42,657 16 8	
Do	61 Days Do of British forces in North-America, to 24th June 1781	- - -	-	-	-	-	13,938 6 10	
	Do	- - - of the forces in the West-Indies, to Do	-	-	-	-	5,068 13 2	
	91 Days subsistence, sundry corps, to 25th March 1781	- - -	-	-	-	-	23,508 — 11	
	61 Days subsistence of Hessians, to 24th June 1781	- - -	-	-	-	-	2,648 7 8	
	Do	- - - troops of Anspach, to Do	-	-	-	-	1,052 16 5	
	Do	- - - troops of Waldeck, to Do	-	-	-	-	—	

Date of the Issue.		Voted Services.	Extraordinaries.
1780.			
22d Dec.	Contractor for home encampments	—	4,207 1 1
	Sundry warrants for extraordinary services	—	34,608 3 10½
		3,334,289 16 —½	4,336,961 12 5½
1781.			
12th Jan.	Remittance Contractors	—	468,028 4 9
16th D°	D°	—	75,000 —
18th D°	Subsistence in advance to 10 independent companies	500 —	
D°	31 Days subsistence of the forces at home, to 23d February 1781	73,499 5 6	
	31 Days D° of militia — to D°	45,887 4 8	
	61 Days stoppages from pay of the forces abroad, to D°	41,787 18 —	
	Six Months subsistence 1st batt. 73d foot, to the 24th of December, 1781	7,740 18 —	
20th D°	183 Days half pay, to 24th Dec. 1780, in part	34,951 17 4½	
8th Feb.	Bank of England, for bills of exchange	—	
13th D°	Two months subsistence in advance, to 3 regiments, to 24th May 1781	—	39,623 2 5½
	61 Days pay of Hanoverians	6,796 —	
	In full of 183 days half pay, to 24th December 1780	7,806 6 11½	
22d D°	In part of 30 days subsistence of the forces at home, to 25th March 1781	6,804 16 10½	
	30 Days — D° militia — to D°	60,683 6 6	
	61 Days D° British forces in America, to 24th August 1781	44,482 10 —	
	61 Days D° of the forces in the West-Indies, to D°	27,003 5 1	
	61 Days D° of Hessians — to D°	7,938 6 10	
		23,508 — 11	

Date of the Issue.		Voted Services.		Extraordinaries.	
1781.					
19th April	61 Days subsistence of troops of Waldeck, to 24th October 1781	1,052	16	5	
28th D ^o	Subsistence of the troops at Gorce, for 9 months	672	16	8	
9th May	Subsidies to foreign Princes	23,322	2	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	
	61 Days pay of Hanoverians	7,806	6	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	
11th D ^o	Bank of England, for bills of exchange	—	—	—	35,062 16 10 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Sundry Provision Contractors	—	—	—	210,733 2 4
14th D ^o	Bank of England, for bills of exchange	—	—	—	12,785 11 11 $\frac{1}{2}$
	Sundry warrants for extraordinary services	—	—	—	87,186 18 3
		£. 1,089,931	17	4	1,401,523 7 10 $\frac{1}{2}$

Date of the Issue.

1781.

19th April

28th D^o

9th May

11th D^o14th D^o

61 Days subsistence of troops of Waldeck, to 24th October 1781

Subsistence of the troops at Gorce, for 9 months

Subsidies to foreign Princes

61 Days pay of Hanoverians

Bank of England, for bills of exchange

Sundry Provision Contractors

Bank of England, for bills of exchange

Sundry warrants for extraordinary services

N^o 2.

The examination of Mr. John Hughson; taken upon oath, the 12th of June 1781.

This examinant saith, that he is Clerk of the Debentures, in the office of the Auditor of the Exchequer; and has been near twenty-five years in the office.

The first knowledge the Auditor of the Exchequer has of the grants of Parliament, for the service of the army, is by the votes of the House of Commons; he is bound to take notice of these grants, and not to issue more than the sums granted.

The King's sign manual, the Treasury warrant, and the order from the Auditor, gives the Paymaster a credit in the Exchequer for the sum mentioned in the order; this sum is issued to him, either in the whole or in parts, in pursuance of letters from a Secretary of the Treasury, until the whole is exhausted. These sums are entered upon the order as they are paid, which is one mode of keeping the accounts of these payments in the Auditor's office: the sums mentioned in these orders are usually round sums, without fractions; and when there remains in the Exchequer a fraction only of the entire sum voted for the service of the army for that year, or whenever the last issue is to be made, instead of a sign manual for that remainder, a privy seal is sent to the Auditor for the payment of it to the Paymaster, taking notice of the sum total that had been directed to be issued by the former signs manual and warrants, and that such sum total, together with the sum remaining, will satisfy the whole sum granted by Parliament that year for the said services.

After an order is completed, it is endorsed by the Paymaster, or his deputy, and remains with that Teller who pays the last sum, as a voucher for the payments.

The Auditor is bound to direct the Tellers to pay the sums mentioned in the warrants, provided they do not exceed the sums granted by Parliament.

JOHN HUGHSON.

Guy Carleton,
T. Anguish,
A. Piggott,
Richard Neave,
Samuel Beachcroft,
George Drummond.

N^o 3.

The examination of Richard Molesworth, Esquire, taken upon oath, the 11th of June 1781.

This examinant saith, that he was Deputy Paymaster in North-America, during the years 1776, 1777, and 1778, the greatest part of which time he was in Rhode-Island. Whenever he apprehended that he should want money for the service of the troops, he applied to the commanding officer of the corps, and settled with him the sum that would probably be wanted, and in consequence of his approbation, he required that sum from the agent of the remitters, who supplied him with it in cash.

It is the duty of the Deputy Paymaster, not to issue any of this money, but by warrant of the commander in chief, or commanding officer of a de-

tached corps; the person entitled to receive any sum for the service of the army, brings this warrant to the Deputy Paymaster, directed to him, and specifying the sum to be paid, to whom, and for what service, or upon account; upon payment of this sum, the person receiving it indorses the warrant, and leaves it with the Deputy Paymaster, and gives him also three receipts for the money, of the same tenor and date, least any of them should be lost; the warrant so indorsed, or the warrant and a receipt, are the vouchers for this payment. One of these receipts he transmits to the Paymaster General, with an account of his receipts and payments, signed by himself; he keeps the warrant in his possession, if it be for an extraordinary service, until it is called for, upon passing the accounts before the Auditor of the Imprest; if it be for the pay of a regiment, it becomes useless, after the account of that regiment is settled.

He himself always paid these warrants in cash, and not by drafts; but if he had been in the same place with the Agent to the Remitters, he could have paid them, and, in his opinion, with more convenience, by drafts upon the Agent.

RICHARD MOLESWORTH.

T. Anguish,
A. Piggott,
Samuel Beachcroft,
George Drummond.

N^o 4.

The examination of the Right Honourable Richard Rigby, Paymaster General of the Forces; taken upon oath, 27th June 1781.

This examinant saith, the sum of four hundred forty-seven thousand one hundred fifty-three pounds eleven shillings and three-pence three farthings, mentioned in the return made by him to this Board, on the 28th of November last, is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, the whole balance of public money then remaining in his hands as Paymaster General of the Forces. This balance does not include the money in the hands of the Deputy Paymasters abroad; it does include the balances in the hands of the Cashier of half-pay, and the Deputy Treasurer of Chelsea Hospital. This balance is liable, in his hands, to every army service whatever. He is of opinion, the whole sum voted every year for the service of the army, must necessarily go through the Paymaster General's hands.

He does not recollect any instance where the Treasury have made any objection to his applications to them for money, nor has he ever been called upon officially by them to give them a state of the balance in his hands.

He considers the books of the office, as the private property of the Paymaster, who may, if he pleases, on his resignation, taken them from the office; it has been, as he is informed, the general practice of his predecessors to take them away as soon as their accounts were made up.

RICHARD RIGBY.

Guy Carleton,
T. Anguish,
A. Piggott,
Richard Neave,
George Drummond.

N^o 5.

The examination of John Powell, Esquire, Cashier in the office of the Paymaster General of the Forces; taken upon oath, the 26th and 29th of June, and 11th of July, 1781.

This examinant saith, that when it was the usage of the office for the Paymaster to ask of the Treasury for a certain portion of the year's supply, it was generally applied for by him under the head of subsistence and pay of the forces at home and abroad. Since the year 1759, the sums have generally been asked of the Treasury under some special head of service.

The Paymaster receives money from sub-accountants, in consequence of their accounts having been settled by the Auditor, and balances appearing to be due from them; these sub-accountants bring to the Pay-office the King's warrant, directing them to pay the sum therein mentioned to the Paymaster General; who, upon receiving it, carries the amount to the credit of the public in the King's account current.

When the Paymaster is to receive money at the Exchequer, he does not receive it either in cash or bills; but, as he keeps his cash in the Bank, the Bank Clerk, who attends there, receives it, and gives the Paymaster credit for it.

The custom has been, ever since he has been in the office, for the Paymaster to make all his payments by drafts on his Banker, signed by his Cashier, very rarely by himself, and then only in the absence of his Cashier.

The savings voted in aid of the supply for the year 1780, arising from stoppages for provisions, the charge of new levies, pensions of officers widows, and subsistence of an augmentation to sundry regiments, were never directed into the hands of the Paymaster General, out of the Exchequer, for those services; but directed, received, and issued, for other services. The sum of ten thousand pounds, out of the savings of the half-pay of reduced officers, voted in aid of the same supply, was money actually in the hands of the Paymaster General, received for that service.

The Secretary at War requires every year, from the Paymaster General, an account of the savings arising by deaths and promotions of half-pay officers, part of which savings is applied to payment of persons on the compassionate list, who are the widows of officers on half-pay, and the children of officers.

No account can be produced of the heads of which the balance in the hands of the Paymaster General consists, without comparing the vote of Parliament every year, for every head of service, with the application; which has never been thought necessary to be done, and would employ many Clerks for a long time.

The Accountant is the officer to make up the accounts of the Paymaster General; the only account he himself has been principally engaged in making up, is that of Lord Holland's, which is not yet completed.

When one year of an account is settled, the balance is carried over to the succeeding year; and upon settling the final account, is paid either to the Paymaster General for the time being, or into the Exchequer, as the King shall direct.

He does not believe that there remains in the hands of the Paymaster General any money upon account of the pay of the Irish regiments; their accounts being all settled and adjusted to the 24th of December 1778.

The Pay Office has been examined, in consequence of his directions, and no books or papers, relative to the accounts of Henry Earl of Lincoln, late Paymaster General of the forces, are to be found there.

Those régiments, which used to be paid in part by the Treasury of Ireland, have, ever since December 1778, been voted and paid by Great-Britain.

No sum was issued from the Pay Office to the Paymaster of the widows pensions, during the year 1780, as he had sufficient in his hands to carry on that service.

JOHN POWELL.

Guy Carleton,
T. Anguish,
A. Piggott,
R. Neave,
S. Beachcroft,
G. Drummond.

N^o 6.

The examination of Charles Bembridge, Esq; Accountant in the office of the Paymaster General of the forces; taken upon oath upon several days, from the 16th of May to the 13th July 1781.

This Examinant saith, that he has been Accountant to the Paymaster General of the forces from March 1776, and in the Pay Office above twenty years.

The Secretary at War, about the time of his delivering to the House of Commons the army estimates, sends copies of them to the Pay Office: After the sums are voted upon these estimates, which are for the ordinary services of the army, the Pay Office receives from the Lords of the Treasury the King's sign manual, directing them to issue, or cause to be issued, out of the Exchequer, to the Paymaster General, a sum therein-mentioned (in time of war usually a million) together with the Treasury warrant, and the order of the Auditor of the Exchequer made in pursuance of the sign manual; these three instruments, after being entered in the Pay Office, are sent from thence to, and left at the Exchequer.

When any part of this money is wanted, the Paymaster General presents a memorial to the Treasury, specifying the sum required, and for what service. In consequence of this memorial, the Treasury direct a letter to the Auditor of the Exchequer, desiring him to issue to the Paymaster General, upon the unsatisfied order, the sum required, and specifying out of what fund, and for what service: this letter, after being entered in the Pay Office, is carried to the Exchequer, where the Deputy Auditor writes, at the bottom of the order above-mentioned, a direction to the teller or tellers, to pay the sum out of a fund or funds mentioned; the order is carried to the office of the pells, where the sum to be issued is recorded, and an entry of it made upon the order; which being produced to the Teller, he pays the sum (deducting the Exchequer fees) the Deputy Paymaster giving him a receipt for the entire sum; and the Bank Clerk attending there, enters to the credit of the Paymaster General, in his Bank book, this sum (the Exchequer fees deducted.)

After the estimates are voted, the establishments are made out at the War Office, and being signed by the King, and countersigned by three Lords of the Treasury, are transmitted to the Pay Office, with the regulation of the subsistence and warrants for the deductions annexed.

The gross sum for a regiment consists of five parts. 1st, The full pay of the commissioned and non-commissioned officers and privates. 2d, The allowance to widows. 3d, The allowance to the Colonel, and for clothing lost by deserters. 4th, The allowance to the Captains for recruiting, &c. 5th, The allowance to the agent.

From this gross sum, except in some particular cases, two deductions are made by virtue of the King's warrant; twelve pence in the pound, called poundage; and one day's pay of the whole establishment, for the service of Chelsea hospital.

The cases exempt from the poundage and hospital are, in each troop of Horse Guards, four shillings a day, being the pay of one private gentleman, as a fund for superannuated men; in the Dragoon Guards and Dragoons, three pence a day, being an addition to the pay of the serjeants, corporals, trumpeters, and private men; in the Foot Guards, four pence a day, being part of the pay of the serjeant, and two pence a day, part of the pay of the corporal. In the invalids, all the pay, except that of the commissioned officers.

The full pay of the commissioned officers is divided into, the subsistence, the poundage, the hospital, and the arrears, called clearings. The full pay of the non-commissioned officers and private men is divided into, the subsistence, the poundage, the hospital, the nett off-reckonings, and the agency.

First. The poundage is made applicable, by the King's warrant, to the following purposes: to the payment of the Exchequer fees for the money received; to the support of Chelsea hospital; to the payment of the charges of the office of the Paymaster-General; and the remainder, to such uses, relating to his service, as the King, by his sign manual, shall direct. It is asked of the Treasury, under the two following heads.

1st. Returned poundage; which is the poundage deducted from the full pay of the effective private men of the foot guards and marching regiments, and ordered to be paid back to them by the King's warrant: this warrant is sent, about every six months, from the War-office to the Pay-office, and specifies what sums are to be paid for this purpose, and to what Agents; upon receipt of this warrant, the Paymaster-General applies to the Treasury, and pays to the Agents, soon after he receives it, the whole sum included in the warrant.

2dly. Chelsea hospital. When twelve months are due, a requisition is sent, every six months, from the Secretary's-office at the hospital, to the Pay-office, specifying the sum wanted; the Paymaster-General then applies for it to the Treasury, and soon after the receipt, generally pays the whole sum to the Deputy Treasurer; whose accounts are examined every year in the office of the Auditor of the Imprest, from whence he obtains a certificate of the sums allowed by the Auditor to have been paid by him; the amount of which certificate the Paymaster-General takes credit for in his public accounts of each year.

These two heads exhaust a great part of the poundage; the residue is exhausted by Payments to the Secretary at War, Commissary-General of the Musters, and his Deputies, the Deputy Paymasters, and for other services to which this fund is applicable; which payments are made by the Paymaster-General out of cash in his hands, without special application for it to the Treasury, more having been asked of the Treasury under some other heads of service, than has been issued for those particular services.

Secondly. The hospital, or one day's pay, is directed by the King's warrant to be applied towards the support of Chelsea hospital; but this day's pay not being sufficient for that purpose, and the poundage being directed in part to be applied to the same service, this day's pay is asked for, blended, and issued, with so much of the poundage as is applied for the use of the hospital.

Thirdly. The subsistence is regulated by the King, for the immediate and constant support of the forces. A month's subsistence for the forces at

home, according to their full establishment, is asked by the Paymaster-General every month, in advance; and, upon his receipt of it from the Exchequer, he pays the whole subsistence to the Agents of the respective regiments: but on asking under the head of subsistence, the Paymaster-General does not confine himself merely to the sum requisite for that service; knowing he shall want money to pay Exchequer fees, and several other expences for which no specific application is made to the Treasury, it has been the practice of the office to add to the subsistence applied for, sums to answer such other purposes and to ask for those sums together with, and under the head of subsistence.

Two months subsistence to the forces at Jamaica, according to the full establishment, is asked, and the whole is issued, two months in advance, to their respective Agents.

The subsistence of the British forces, according to their full establishment, in all the other parts of the West-Indies and North-America, is divided into three parts; the first is a stoppage, directed by the Secretary at War, of a certain sum, consisting of the whole subsistence of such officers as choose to draw for it upon their Agents, and of a sum to carry on the recruiting service, and the allowance to the Agent; this sum is asked of the Treasury every two months, and the whole issued to the Agents. The second part is a stoppage, directed also by the Secretary at War, out of the subsistence of the non-commissioned officers and private men, of two-pence halfpenny *per* day each, towards answering the expence of a ration of provisions allowed them abroad; a sum arising from so many of these stoppages as are equal in number to the rations actually received by the troops, is left in the Exchequer, and the Paymaster General, having taken credit for the full subsistence of which these stoppages make a part, gives credit for them to the public, from time to time, in his account of extraordinaries: the remainder of these stoppages falls into the clearings, and is asked and received by the Paymaster General under that head of service.

The subsistence of the garrisons of Gibraltar and Minorca are subject to the first of these stoppages, but not to the second.

The third part, being the residue of this subsistence, after deducting these stoppages, is the sum to be paid to them in cash, to complete their subsistence. It is usual to ask this sum of the Treasury, under the head of subsistence, every two months, so as to supply the Contractors, for remitting six months in advance; after it is received, the Paymaster General issues to these Contractors either the whole, or so much of it as he thinks necessary, from the state of the balances in the hands of his several deputies, according to the latest information he has received from them; which balances arise, and increase, from the regiment's not being complete. This money, not remitted to the deputies abroad, is applied by the Paymaster General towards the payment of services for which he does not ask a supply from the Treasury.

When money is issued to the Contractor, he gives bills upon his agents abroad, payable usually at three months after date, which bills are sent by the Pay Office to the Deputy Paymasters abroad, to be received of these agents.

The subsistence of the non-commissioned officers and privates in Africa, deducting a stoppage of two-pence halfpenny a man per day, for wine, is asked when wanted, and the whole sum received is paid to the Contractor for remitting.

The subsistence of the forces in the East-Indies, according to their full establishment, is asked when the Secretary at War directs, usually every six months, so as to keep it twelve months in advance; the whole, when received, is issued to the agents,

A sum for subsistence, is sometimes issued upon account. Upon raising a new corps, the Secretary at War sends a direction to the Paymaster General, signifying his Majesty's pleasure, that he should issue to the Agent of that corps, a certain sum on account of subsistence: Upon receipt of that sum from the Exchequer, he pays the whole of it to the Agent.

Fourthly. The nett off-reckonings are thus computed:—The difference between the full pay and the subsistence, of the non-commissioned officers and private men, constitute the gross off-reckonings; from which the poundage and hospital (unless exempted) and agency upon their full pay, being deducted, the remainder is the nett off-reckonings; which are appropriated to the cloathing of the non-commissioned officers and private men. Six months of these are usually asked when fifteen or sixteen months are due; and the whole, when received, are paid, after public notice is given, to the persons to whom the colonels have assigned them, upon their application, and production of the assignment.

Fifthly. The agency is issued to the Agent, together with, and as a part of the clearings.

Sixthly. The clearings are made out in the following manner:—From the full pay of the regiment, according to the establishment, are deducted, The respites, if any, The full poundage, The hospital, The nett off-reckonings, The allowance to widows, and The subsistence actually paid in cash and provisions; the remainder, being The agency, The balance of the full pay due to the commissioned officers, and so much of the subsistence of the non-commissioned officers and private men as has not been issued, constitute the clearings. Twelve months of these clearings are usually issued, about fifteen or sixteen months after they are due; after they are received from the Exchequer, and public notice given, the whole of them is paid to the Agents, upon their application.

Seventhly. The allowance to widows, is a fund applicable to the support of the widows of commissioned officers: He does not recollect that any sum, under this head, has ever been asked of the Treasury; the Paymaster of the widows pensions applies from time to time to the Paymaster-General for a supply for this service, who pays to him the sum he requires, out of any cash that may have been issued to him from the Exchequer, under any other heads of service.

Eighthly. The allowance to the colonel, and for cloathing lost by deserters, consists of two parts, the subsistence of one private man, which is asked and issued with the subsistence, and the residue falls into and becomes a part of the gross off-reckonings.

Ninthly. The allowance to the captain for recruiting, &c. and

Tenthly. The allowance to the Agent—are asked and issued to the Agents with the subsistence.

The gross sum for a regiment of militia, consists of, The pay of the commissioned officers, The subsistence of the non-commissioned officers and private men, and, allowance to the Agents. The pay of the commissioned officers is made subject, by the King's warrant, to the poundage and hospital. This pay, and also the subsistence of the whole regiment, the allowance to the Agent, and the clearings, are asked of the Treasury, issued to the Agents, and applied in like manner, and at the like times, as in the case of the regulars serving at home. The cloathing of the militia is voted separate from the pay. The warrants for the cloathing of each regiment are made out at the War-Office, signed by the Secretary at War, and delivered to the several Agents; they carry them to be countersigned by the Lords of the Treasury, who direct money for the payment of them into the h-

the Paymaster-General, at such times as they think proper; after which, upon production of the warrants by the Agents, the full sums are paid to them. No sums are voted for the contingencies of the militia, but they are carried to the account of extraordinary.

The gross sum for a regiment, and for an independent company of invalids, consists of the pay of the commissioned officers, and the subsistence of the non-commissioned officers and private men; of the cloathing; of the allowance to the captain for medicines; of the allowance to the Agent; and, in the regiment, the allowance to the colonel.

The pay of the commissioned officers is subject to the poundage and hospital, and, together with the subsistence of the whole regiment, the allowance to the colonel, the captain, the Agent, and the clearings, are asked of the Treasury, issued to the Agents, and applied in like manner, and at the like times, as in the case of the regulars serving at home.

The cloathing is voted on the establishment, as estimated by the Secretary at War; the Paymaster-General applies for it to the Treasury every two years, and pays the whole to the Contractors appointed by him to clothe them.

In regard to the garrisons in Great-Britain, the Secretary at War sends to the Pay-Office, usually every six months, a warrant, directing the Paymaster-General to make out a debenture for the full pay of the garrisons, unless respites are directed: He sends this debenture to the War-Office; upon which the King's warrant is obtained, and sent to the Pay-Office; the total sum contained in the debenture, being received at the Exchequer, is issued to the Agents of the Governors, the poundage, hospital, and civil list duty being deducted.

In regard to the General and Staff Officers in Great-Britain, a certificate comes from the War-Office to the Pay-Office, containing the names of the officers. Upon a debenture for the full pay of the officers named in the certificate being made out, and a warrant for payment obtained, the Paymaster-General pays, either to the officers themselves, or to their Agents, on their application, the sums due to them, reserving the poundage, the hospital, and civil list duty, from those liable to pay it. In regard to the General and Staff Officers, and officers of the garrisons and hospitals abroad, the Paymaster-General asks for the whole sum voted, and, upon the like certificate, debenture, and warrant, he pays in like manner, to the officers named in the warrant, the sums due to them, with the like reservations; and in these cases the sums voted are usually more than the sums contained in the warrants; and the greatest part of these sums, and of the sums due to the General and Staff Officers at home, are paid to Agents.

After the sum is voted for the reduced officers, the Secretary at War sends to the Pay-Office the establishment, signed by the King, and countersigned by the Lords of the Treasury, specifying the names of the several officers, and the sums they are entitled to; when six months are due, the Paymaster-General applies for it; and when received, public notice is given, and the sums paid to the respective officers, or to their Agents, on their application, deducting sixpence in the pound, directed by his Majesty's warrant to be applied to the support of Chelsea hospital.

The Paymaster-General opens an account in his ledger, with every one of the reduced officers, inserted in every year's establishment. None of these ledgers are made up; there are many subsisting claims upon every one of them. The Paymaster-General receives every year, at two periods, the whole sum voted for this service, but no separate account of it is kept in the books of the office.

After

After the sum is voted for the out-pensioners of Chelsea hospital, a requisition is sent, every six months, from the office of the Secretary to the hospital, to the Pay-Office, for six months pay in advance; the Paymaster-General applies for this sum, and it is the practice of the office to issue the whole to the Deputy, the Paymaster-General being himself, by virtue of his office, Treasurer of the hospital. The Deputy Treasurer issues from time to time, to the Paymaster of the out-pensioners, sums for that service; for which sums he is an accountant, and passes his accounts before the auditors of the imprest.

The charge of the foreign troops consists of the subsidy to the Prince, and the pay of the troops. The subsidy is paid, without any deduction, to the Agent of the Prince, pursuant to a warrant from the Treasury, obtained by the Agent, and sent to the Paymaster-General for that purpose. The pay of the troops consists of the subsistence, the arrears of the officers, and a deduction of two-pence a day for cloathing from the non-commissioned officers and private men. A warrant is usually made out for a whole year's full pay without deductions. The subsistence of the whole corps, according to the establishment, is usually asked of the Treasury by the Paymaster-General, in like manner as the subsistence of the British forces serving abroad; and the whole, or so much of it, is remitted to the Deputy Paymasters abroad, as may, from the balance appearing to be in their hands, be judged necessary to answer the demands upon them for that service. The arrears, deductions, and the remainder of the subsistence, constitute one fund, for which the Agent to the Prince applies to the Treasury, at such times, and for such sums, as he thinks proper; which applications are referred to the Paymaster-General, and, upon his report that the sums required are due, the Treasury direct into his hands, either the whole, or so much of it as they think proper to pay, and the Paymaster-General pays to the Agent the whole sum so directed into his hands.

Two sums are every year voted for contingencies, twenty thousand pounds for the establishment at home, and four thousand pounds for the establishment abroad. It has not been the usage of the office, for some years, to ask for these sums of the Treasury under the head of contingencies; but, the Paymaster-General having always in his hands money arising from sums asked by him for other services, which do not exhaust the whole sums applied for, it is the practice of the office to pay, out of those remaining sums, the warrants of the Secretary at War, made out for contingencies; the sums voted for this service being insufficient for this purpose, the warrants for so much of the contingencies as exceed the sum voted, are sent to the Treasury, to be countersigned by the Lords, and are carried to the account of extraordinaries. Warrants for the payments of some of the contingencies of any one year, are seldom produced at the Pay-Office until some time afterwards. Great part of the sum voted for the contingencies of the year 1780, is not yet expended, the warrants not being yet produced; and the account of the payments out of the sum voted for the contingencies of the year 1780, will not vary much from that of the year 1778; nor will the account of the payments out of the poundage and hospital, except in the articles of returned poundage, Exchequer fees, and Chelsea hospital. There are no other miscellaneous heads of payments kept in the books of the office, except those of contingencies and extraordinaries.

The extraordinaries of the army are never asked of the Treasury by the Paymaster-General; the person entitled to receive money for any extraordinary service, brings to the Pay-Office a warrant signed by the Lords of the Treasury, specifying the sum to be paid, the person to whom, and for what service; which warrant is entered at the Pay-Office; after which, the T-

sure sends to the Pay-Office, at such times as they think proper, a direction to the Auditor of the Exchequer, to issue to the Paymaster-General the sum applied for, specifying the fund out of which it is to be paid; after the money is received, he pays it to, or to the use of the person mentioned in the warrant, who indorses it; this warrant is the voucher for the Paymaster-General, in passing his accounts with the auditor.

The fund in the Exchequer, out of which the extraordinaries are paid, is compounded of the whole, or so much of the vote of credit as is directed to be so applied by the Lords of the Treasury, and of sums which have been voted for the ordinary services of the army, and have not been taken out of the Exchequer, those services not having come in course of payment. When these extraordinaries are voted by Parliament, the sum that has been borrowed from the ordinary services is replaced.

All the payments made for provisions, are carried to the account of extraordinaries; but sums having been voted for that service, the Paymaster-General deducts the sums so voted, out of that part of the extraordinaries under the head of provisions.

Ever since he has been accountant in the office, the Treasury have always directed the sums applied for by the Paymaster-General to be issued to him out of the Exchequer, without making any objection to them, that he knows of.

A Deputy Paymaster is appointed by, and accountable to the Paymaster-General; when he goes out of office, his successor, if he has no objection, continues him; and he becomes a Deputy to the successor from the day of his appointment.

Every sum received at any one time from the Exchequer, for the ordinary services, though consisting of different parts, asked and directed at different times, and for different services, is not separated and carried to the credit of the respective heads of service for which it has been asked; but is entered in the cash book as one entire sum, received that day from the Exchequer, and from thence posted to the credit of the King's account current in the Ledger; the receipt of the extraordinaries is entered and posted in the same manner. Were such a separation to be made, it would much increase the business of the Pay-office; without any apparent advantage to the public.

Separate and distinct accounts are kept of all the payments, under their proper heads of service; but, as it has never been thought necessary to keep separate and distinct accounts of the receipts, it would be very difficult at any time to give an account of what parts the balance in the hands of the Paymaster-General consists, and to what services each part is liable; that cannot be done, without making up all the accounts of the Paymaster-General, from the time he entered into office to the date of the balance, which must necessarily take up much time, and be attended with great trouble.

It has been the constant practice of the office, ever since he knew it, to consider the cash as one entire sum, under whatever heads of service the parts it consists of may have been asked. There is only one cash account of all the money received.

All the payments, of every kind, made by the Paymaster-General, are in consequence of warrants under the sign manual, and countersigned either by the Lords of the Treasury, or Secretary at War: and, where the warrant is for the payment of contingencies, which exceed the sum voted, it is countersigned by both. Salaries that have a continuance, are paid by virtue of a permanent warrant; entered at the office of the Auditor of the Imprest: in this case, the receipt for the salary is the voucher for the Paymaster-General. In general, the warrant, indorsed by the person receiving it, is the voucher.

voucher. Where many persons receive under the same warrant, the separate receipt of each, with the warrant, are the vouchers. For the payment of Exchequer fees, the voucher is a certificate from the Exchequer of the sum paid.

When a regiment is cleared, the King's warrant is obtained for the full pay of that regiment, unless there is any respite; this pay warrant, indorsed by the agent, together with the regimental account book, signed by him, and the receipts for the off-reckonings, signed by the person having the assignment, are the Paymaster General's vouchers for the pay of that regiment. The voucher for the payment of an extraordinary abroad, is the warrant of the commander in chief, indorsed by the person to whom the sum is paid, or his receipt for it, together with the King's warrant, covering all such payments made in one or more years.

In the ordinary services, a payment made in a year subsequent to that in which it was voted, is carried to the account of payments made in the year it belongs to, unless the account of that year is made up.

A respite, is a sum directed by the King's warrant, countersigned by the Secretary at War, to be deducted out of the whole pay of a regiment; in consequence of this warrant, which is sent to the Pay-office, that sum is not applied for by the Paymaster General, but remains in the Exchequer.

A warrant for levy money is made out by the Secretary at War, who signifies from time to time, to the Paymaster General, what part of it is wanted; upon which, he applies for that sum to the Treasury, and when received, issues the whole of it to the agents of the regiments.

Distinct accounts are kept of the Exchequer fees paid, and also of the deduction of twelve pence in the pound, hospital, and allowance to widows; it has not been thought necessary to post up and settle these accounts, until the time the account of the year is made up in the Auditor's office. A distinct account is also kept of the sum issued upon imprest to the Paymaster of the widows pensions, and of the payments out of the deduction of twelve pence in the pound, and one day's pay.

The sums received by the Paymaster General, are either from the Exchequer, or the Treasury of Ireland, or from persons whose accounts have been settled, and who have been directed to pay their balances into his office. Sums received by him, under this head, have from time to time been applied by him in aid either of the army supplies, or of the extraordinaries; and the balance now remaining in his hands, on this account, is eight thousand four hundred sixty-three pounds ten shillings and four-pence.

The yearly accounts of the Paymaster General are contained in two ledgers, the full pay and half pay ledgers; all these ledgers are kept open until the Paymaster General settles his final account.

The accounts of the Paymaster General, when first sent to the office of the Auditor of the Imprest, generally contain payments only, with their vouchers; they remain there until the Auditor has examined them, and sends his queries to the Pay-office. The accounts of the first three years and a half of the present Paymaster General, were sent into the Auditor's office before Christmas last: no queries, relative to any of them, have as yet been received at the Pay-office.

In every account sent to the Auditor's office, it is usual for the Paymaster General to charge himself with the money received by him from the Exchequer, during the period of that account, in one gross sum, authenticated by the imprest roll, made out at the Exchequer; and to charge himself with the money from the Treasury of Ireland, and with the several sums received from other people; and to surcharge himself with the gain by exchange.

and with the poundage, hospital, and allowance to widows. He discharges himself, by vouchers for all his payments, ranged under their several heads of services.

He is of opinion, that it would not be expedient for the Paymaster General, upon the resignation of his office, to pay over the balance then in his hands to his successor; and that the subsequent business of the office should be carried on by him, for the following reasons:

First. The Paymaster General has his deputies in various parts of the world, who are in the constant receipt of large sums of money on his account; sufficient time must be allowed them to adjust and settle their accounts.

Secondly. The sums voted for the army, are issued to the Paymaster General at different times, and under various heads of service; if he was not permitted, after his resignation, to complete these services to the period of the year his accounts are carried on; but that part of those services is to be paid by him, and part by his successor; it would multiply accounts, and tend to confusion; and the army accounts, at present very intricate, would be more perplexed, and the making out and passing them retarded.

Thirdly. Great confusion would be occasioned in the accounts, if warrants for the pay of the garrisons at home and abroad, of the general and staff officers, and officers of the hospital, at home and abroad, voted in the time of one paymaster, were to be paid by his successors; and the same would be the effect respecting the half pay voted for the reduced officers.

CHARLES BEMBRIDGE.

Guy Carleton,
T. Anguish,
A. Piggott,
Richard Neave,
Samuel Beachcroft,
George Drummond.

20

Account of payments made by the right honourable Richard Rigby, Paymaster General, out of the deductions of 12 d. per pound, and one day's pay, for one year, from the 25th of December 1777 to the 24th of December 1778, both inclusive.

Dates of warrants.

To the right honourable Richard Rigby, Paymaster General, for his pay and allowances, to
24th of December 1778: viz.

To his allowance, at 3,000 l. per annum

For under officers and clerks

For contingencies of his office

For his pay, as Treasurer of Chelsea hospital

To Lord Barrington, Secretary at War, for his salary, and for that of his under officers and clerks, to the 15th of December 1778, at 1.455 l. per ann. - 1,416 18 8

To Mr. Jenkinson, for 9 days D^o to 24th December 1778

To Lord Barrington, for his additional allowance, to 15th of December

1778, at 1,000l. per ann.

To Mr. Jenkinson, for 9 days D° to 24th December 1778

1778.

July 13th

To Christopher D'Oyly, Esquire, Commissary General of the musters, for 6 months, to 24th June 1778 75 — —

1779.

Jan. 13th

To D^o for 6 months, to 24th of December

To D° for 365 days additional allowance, for contingencies to D°

1-1000-1

760 — —

1000

365 — —

5,725

To Lord Barrington. Secretary at War. for his salary, and for that of his under officers and

1,416 18 .8

4814

+

973 16 9

26 3

2,455

hs, to 24th

75

2

75-1-1

To the six Deputy Commissaries, for their additional allowance, for 12 months, to the 24th December 1778; viz.

Mr. Overend	-	-	50
Mr. Sadlier	-	-	50
Mr. Miller	-	-	50
Mr. Kerr	-	-	50
Mr. Bernard	-	-	50
Mr. Stewart	-	-	50

To William Charles Lempriere, as Deputy Commissary of musters at Jersey and Guernsey, for 12 months allowance, to 24th of December 1778

To the following Deputy Paymasters of the forces, for their pay, for 365 days, to the 24th of December 1778; viz.

Mr. Sleper, at Gibraltar	-	-	300
Mr. Digby, at Minorca	-	-	50
Mr. Boon, at Montreal	-	-	547 10
Mr. Elwyn, at Louisbourg	-	-	547 10
Mr. Williams, at Nova Scotia	-	-	547 10
Mr. Barrow, at New-York	-	-	547 10
Mr. Bembridge, at Québec, 317 days, from 11th of February to 24th of December 1778	-	-	475 10
Mr. Garnier, at Boston, 280 days, from 25th December 1777 to 30th September 1778	-	-	420
Mr. Molesworth, at Rhode Island, 365 days, to 24th December 1778	-	-	1,095
Mr. Thomas, at D ^o 203 days, from 5th of June to D ^o	-	-	609
To Timothy Cawwall, Esq; for 12 months additional allowance as Deputy Paymaster General, in reward for his care and fidelity, to D ^o	-	-	500
To John Powell, Esquire, for 12 months D ^o for his trouble, care, diligence, and fidelity, to D ^o	-	-	270

653	12	8
17,930	4	4
18,573	5	9
32,557	7	10
28,851	9	7
114,265	10	2

To new year's gifts at the Treasury and Exchequer
 To returned pounce of the Foot Guards and marching regiments, deducted out of their
 pay, from 25th of December 1777 to 24th of June 1778
 To Do from 25th June to 24th December 1778
 To fees at the Exchequer
 To the in-pensioners of Chelsea hospital, and for salaries and wages of the officers of the
 hospital, and for tradesmen's bills, &c.

Amount of the deduction of 12 d. per pound for the year 1778 £. 103,771 9 8
 Amount of the deduction of hospital, or one day's pay, for Do.
 year 5,787 15 9

Overpaid in the year 1778, more than deducted

108,559	5	5
5,786	4	9
114,265	10	2

Pay Office, 4th July 1781.

C. BEMBRIDGE.

1779.	To the 55th D° for 6 months, to 24th June 1778	-	-	-	97	1	0	98
October 20th.	To the 44th D°	-	-	-	89	14	10	
	To the 44th D°	-	-	-	26	18	8	
	To the 44th D°	-	-	-	46	14	11	
	To the 55th D°	-	-	-	58	1	11	
	To the 26th D°	-	-	-	124	6	2	
Sept. 19th.	To the 28th D°	-	-	-	58	4	1	
1778.	To the 26th D°	-	-	-	46	1	9	
Nov. 11th.	To the 33d D°	-	-	-	85	13	9	
1779.	To the 41st, and independent companies of invalids, for 6 months to D°	-	-	-	656	4	5	
Jan. 29th	To the 56th regiment of foot for 6 months, to D°	-	-	-	89	15	4	
1st.	To the 37th D°	-	-	-	195	11	—	
March 4th.	To the 72th D°	-	-	-	565	12	8	
	To the 3d regiment of foot guards, for 12 months, to 24th December 1778.	-	-	-	581	—	—	
15th.	To the 2d D°	-	-	-	508	6	11	
	To the 1st D°	-	-	-	698	6	8	
19th.	To the 2d battalion of D° for 12 months, to D°	-	-	-	393	15	11	
	To the 46th regiment of foot, for 6 months, to 24th June 1778.	-	-	-	56	3	3	
	To the 64th D°	-	-	-	142	3	4	
	To the 1st regiment of dragoon guards, for 6 months, to D°	-	-	-	310	14	—	
1778.	To the 12th regiment of foot, for 6 months, to D°	-	-	-	60	12	3	
October 30th.	To the 51st D°	-	-	-	21	3	2	
	To the 58th D°	-	-	-	66	3	9	
1779.	To the 46th D°	-	-	-	80	2	3	
April 13th.	To the 48th D°	-	-	-	126	—	9	
29th.	To the 56th D°	-	-	-	101	3	—	
June 18th.	To the 56th D°	-	-	-				

1779. April 29th	To the 29th regiment of foot, for 6 months, to 24th June 1778	158	2	8
	To Lord Barrington, for house-rent, as Secretary at War, to 15th of December 1778, at 200l. per annum	194	15	4
	To Mr. Jenkinson, for D ^o as D ^o 9 days, to 24th December 1778	55	4	8
1778. March 28th	To one quarter's contingencies of the Secretary at War's Office, to 24th March 1778	200	—	—
June 27th	For one quarter's D ^o - to 24th June 1778	1,511	15	1
Oct. 9th	For one quarter's D ^o - to 29th September 1778	1,509	17	11
Dec. 31st	For one quarter's D ^o - to 24th December 1778	1,038	18	7
July 13th	To Mr Gould, 182 days additional pay as Judge Advocate, to 24th June 1778	1,348	12	4
1779. Feb. 17th	To D ^o - 183 D ^o - to 24th December	182	—	—
1778. July 13th	To D ^o for contingencies of his office, 6 months, to 24th June 1778	183	—	—
1779. Feb. 17th	To D ^o for D ^o - 6 months, to 24th December	398	6	7
	To John Garnier, Esquire, allowance as Deputy Judge Advocate General, to 30th September 1778, at 200l. per annum	496	17	10
	To Mr. Hume, as D ^o for 62 days, to 24th December 1778	153	14	—
1778. July 13th	To Christopher D'Oyly, Esquire, Commissary General, for postage of letters, &c. for 6 months, to 24th June 1778	33	17	7
1779. Jan. 13th	To Christopher D'Oyly, Esquire, for postage of letters, for 6 months, to 24th December 1778	187	11	7
	To Messrs. Bunbury and Bowlby, for 12 months contingencies of their office, as Comptrollers of the accounts to the army, to 24th December 1778	22	15	—
		22	17	6
		900	—	—

1778.	To William Hope Weir, Esquire, as Deputy Commissary of the Musters in North-Britain, for his 2 deputies, for 365 days, to D ^o	219	—	—
March 20th	To the turnkey of Berwick, for his pay	30	—	—
	To the trustees of Fulham Bridge, for the pasing and repasing of horse and foot soldiers, from 18th July 1777 to 17th January 1779	150	—	—
April 7th	To the Deputy Provost Marshal to the horse and grenadier guards, for one year's rent of a house, to Lady-day 1778	25	—	—
	To Messrs. Eyre and Strahan, for paper, printing, &c. Acts of Parliament, Rules and Orders for the better government of the army	243	14	8
Oct. 20th	To D ^o for the like service	389	13	—
April 24th	To Colonel Wrighten, for an additional salary as Major to the Royal Hospital at Chelsea	100	—	—
30th	To Mr. Jackson, in lieu of the emolument received by his predecessor, in selling spirituous liquors, &c. in the Savoy, for one year, to Lady-day 1778	50	—	—
	To rent of a house, for the Chelsea Board, for 12 months, to 24th December 1778	100	—	—
	To rent of Pendennis Castle, for 12 months, to 5th January 1779	200	—	—
August 31st	To Mr. Heathcote, for supplying the horse-guards with water, for 12 months, to Midsummer 1778	20	—	—
1779.	To Patrick Lindsay, for postage of letters, stationary, &c. in the Secretary's office in North-Britain, for 12 months, to 24th December 1778	49	11	3
Jan. 29th	To Ensign Anderson, for forwarding deserters to and from Chester and Ireland, for 12 months, to D ^o	59	—	3
25th	To John Birbeck, for his care and expence in forwarding officers, soldiers, letters, and packets, between Great-Britain and Minorca	40	—	—
	To William Charles Lempriere, Esquire, Deputy Commissary of Musters at Jersey and Guernsey, for his additional pay, for 365 days, to 24th December 1778	63	17	6
Sept. 30th	To Captain Joseph Walter, for fire and candle for the Gunner's guard in St. James's Park, for the year 1778	40	—	—

1777.	To Charlotte Needham, his Majesty's bounty	100
Dec. 13th		100
1778.		100
Jan. 12th	To Mary Lee, D ^o	80
	To Mrs. Ann Williamfon, D ^o	50
	To Miss Joyce Forrester, D ^o	100
	To Mrs. Ann Walth, D ^o	50
16th	To Mrs. Mary Lyon, D ^o	100
March 18th	To Mrs. Agnew, D ^o	100
Feb. 28th	To Mrs. Jane Spendlove, D ^o	100
March 18th	To Mrs. Eleanor Rutherford, D ^o	100
May 11th	To Mrs. Mary Sparke, D ^o	100
	To Mrs. Sophia Barlow, D ^o	100
June 8th	To Mrs. Jane Tonym, D ^o	100
Aug. 8th	To Mrs. Dorothea Crump, D ^o	100
	To Mrs. Margaret Cochran, D ^o	100
Dec. 3d	To Mrs. Charlotte Needham, D ^o	100
31st	To Lieutenant Colonel William Morris, in consideration of his long and faithful services in the army, for one year, to 4th November 1778	100
1779.		100
Feb. 17th	To Moses Corbet, Esquire, Lieutenant Governor of Jerfey, in consideration of D ^o in said Island, for one year, to 31st December 1778	100
	To 12 months allowance to Lieutenant Colonel Donellan, a lunatic, to 10th December 1778	100
24,914 19 8		
CHARLES BEMBRIDGE.		
Pay-office, 4th July 1781.		

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COUNT of the balance in the hands of the right honourable Richard Rigby, Paymaster-General of the forces, on the 31st of December 1768, and at the end of each succeeding year, to the 31st of December 1780, inclusive. Prepared pursuant to a precept from the Commissioners of Accounts, dated 13th July 1781.

Balance in the hands of the right honourable Richard Rigby, Paymaster General of the forces, on the 31st of December 1768	—	—	—	—	—	142,652	8	5
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1769	—	—	—	—	—	209,589	5	9
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1770	—	—	—	—	—	345,036	4	7
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1771	—	—	—	—	—	431,303	15	5
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1772	—	—	—	—	—	358,399	15	2
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1773	—	—	—	—	—	406,364	10	3
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1774	—	—	—	—	—	481,269	9	3
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1775	—	—	—	—	—	487,172	12	6
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1776	—	—	—	—	—	557,891	14	11
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1777	—	—	—	—	—	658,946	13	10
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1778	—	—	—	—	—	975,631	11	6
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1779	—	—	—	—	—	1,028,284	13	—
Ditto in the hands of D ^o on the 31st of December 1780	—	—	—	—	—	948,239	13	1

**JN^o POWELL,
CHA: BEMBRIDGE.**

No. 10.

ACCOUNT of the total sums received and paid by the Paymaster General of his Majesty's forces, for every month, from the 1st of January 1780 to the 31st of May 1781; with the total of the balance remaining in his hands at the end of each month. Prepared pursuant to a precept from the Commissioners of Accounts, dated the 1st of June 1781.

Year.	Months.	Received.	Paid.	Balance.
1779.	December, remaining	—	—	1,028,284 8 —
1780.	January	411,322 15	419,866 17 9	1,019,739 5 8
	February	241,276 5	264,036 14 9	996,979 16 2
	March	916,212 16	867,974 7 1	1,045,218 5 3
	April	528,568 12	684,003 18 2	889,782 19 9
	May	895,554 11	634,961 9 11	1,150,376 1 6
	June	677,416 14	878,455 1 6	949,337 14 —
	July	634,580 3 7	758,634 13 6	825,283 4 1
	August	773,235 1 7	819,934 5 2	778,584 1 6
	September	304,903 2 9	341,126 7 1	742,366 14 6
	October	658,409 5 2	638,391 14 7	762,384 8 9
	November	426,318 8 7	778,035 14 11	447,153 11 3
	December	1,367,274 19 5	829,722 8 9	648,239 13 1
1781.	January	787,211 14 3	908,089 15 11	833,361 11 5
	February	232,573 6 9	205,703 5 11	862,231 12 3
	March	1,483,633 2 —	1,180,710 16 11	1,105,153 17 4
	April	235,639 14 —	604,637 10 10	796,156 — 6
	May	623,988 3 1	1,018,097 9 11	407,046 14 6

J^N. POWELL, C^HA. BEMBRIDGE.

Pay-Office, Horse Guards, 3d July 1781.

No. II.

An ACCOUNT of the sums issued to Henry Earl of Lincoln, late Paymaster-General of the forces, between the 23d of December 1719 and the 24th of June 1720; specifying the date and amount of each issue.

The sums issued to Henry Earl of Lincoln, late Paymaster-General of the forces, between the 23d of December 1719, and the 24th of June 1720, (specifying the date and amount of each issue) amount to the sum of four hundred seventy-three thousand one hundred twenty-seven pounds and sixpence farthing; viz.

	Date of each Issue.	Amount of each Issue.
Henry Earl of Lincoln —	29th December 1719 —	200,000 — —
	18th January —	59,000 — —
	28th D ^o —	39,693 12 5
	19th February —	14,235 5 3
	27th D ^o —	53,928 17 8
	23d March —	39,693 12 5
	1st April 1720 —	11,001 1 11
	22d D ^o —	645 13 2½
	3d May —	39,693 12 5
	12th D ^o —	14,235 5 8
	27th D ^o —	10,000 — —
		£. 473,127 — 6½

JOHN HUGHSON.

Exchequer,
the 27th of June 1781.

FEBRUARY 5.

No public business.—Sir George Yonge spoke of the conduct of a Sir George person at Honiton, who had threatened the Electors, and a day was Yonge appointed to hear the case.

FEB. 6. The Lord Advocate of Scotland laid before the House, some Lord Advocate papers from the Secret Committee on India affairs, which, he said, *case of Scotland.* formed a kind of supplement to the two reports from that committee, which he had already had the honour to lay before the House. The order which the committee had received, to enquire into the causes of the Maratta war, had necessarily led them to go back many years, in the history of our settlement at Madras, that they might be the better able to find out and ascertain the precise causes of the war, to which the House had thought proper to direct their attention: the task was very laborious; but they had submitted to it with readiness; pursued it with steadiness and perseverance; and had been able to form a third report, which he hoped would be ready to be laid on the table in eight or ten days. With that report the proceedings of the committee would close; because with it, they should have completed all the orders they had received from the House, as far at least as their judgments, and the materials on which they had to work, would permit them. He would not anticipate any thing, or pretend to bias the House; by stating then the opinion of their committee, but this much he might venture to say, that the committee thought that the business ought not to rest where it now stood. He presumed it would be naturally expected, that the report should be followed with some proceedings, and resolutions of the House; and very probably the expectations of the House would be turned towards him, as chairman of the committee, to set these proceedings afloat; he therefore gave notice, that on Monday fortnight, he would move some proposition, founded on the reports already before the House; and on that which, before the expiration of a fortnight, he should have the honor to present.

The report was ordered to lie on the table, and the learned Lord moved, that a sufficient number of copies be printed for the use of the members: the motion passed of course.

Mr. Alderman Newnham acquainted the House that very great in- Alderman Newnham conveniencies had arisen, from the practice of our masters of ships ransoming them, after they had fallen into the hands of the enemy: the inconveniencies, he said, were infinitely greater than the House could be well aware of; but those who were embarked in trade felt them very heavily: in order to put an end to them, he moved for leave to bring in a bill to prevent his Majesty's subjects from ransoming ships taken from them by the enemy.

Lord Mulgrave confirmed what Mr. Newnham had said, and assured Lord Mulgrave the House they would find the subject of very great magnitude, and highly deserving their attention. The motion was then seconded by the noble Lord; and the question having been put, leave was given, without any opposition, to bring in the bill.

Mr. Powney revived the conversation which first took place the day Mr. Powney before yesterday, on the subject of paupers. He said that the practice of removing those who were likely to become burthensome to the parish, called upon the humanity and good sense of the House to interpose: the various abuses committed on this head were almost beyond

beyond conception : he himself knew an instance, when 50 industrious families had been driven from a parish, not because they were poor or burthensome, but for fear they should. He concluded by moving for leave to bring in a bill to prevent vexatious removals.

Mr. Gilbert. Mr. *Gilbert* said he had turned his thoughts very much to the subject, and after various endeavours to frame a bill upon it, he found the question to be merely speculative, but by no means practicable; at least he had found it far above his abilities: there were already some bills before the House, which he had the honour to bring in, and he trusted they would answer some of the purposes which the honourable member had in view; at all events, he wished the hon. member would withdraw his motion for the present, until the fate of those bills should be known, or until their operations should be experienced, if they should pass into a law.

Sir George Yonge. Sir *George Yonge* objected to the motion, and stated various cases, in which such a law as the hon. member wished to obtain, would be injurious or inexpedient.

Sir Richard Sutton. Sir *Richard Sutton*, on the other hand, opposed case to case; and from the cases he quoted, he pronounced that the necessity of such a law as his hon. friend was desirous to have passed, must strike every gentleman.

The question was afterwards put on the motion, which was carried without a division; and leave was accordingly given to Mr. Poway to bring in his bill.

The House adjourned in a few minutes after.

Feb. 7. As this was the last day for receiving petitions on private business, there were a great many brought in; and a considerable time, of course, was spent in reading them. When they were all disposed of, the House, on the motion of Mr. Fox, resolved itself into a committee; to enquire into the causes of the want of success of our naval force during the war, and particularly in the year 1781. As soon as the committee was formed, the clerks, one relieving the other, read through all the papers that had at various times been laid upon the table by Lord Myngrave, in consequence of motions to that purpose, made by Mr. Fox, and which we have inserted for the benefit of our readers. The reading of these papers took up three hours; so that it was half an hour after six o'clock, before

Mr. Fox. Mr. *Fox* rose to move a resolution of the committee, founded on those papers. He said, that if they had been laid upon the table time enough to have been sufficiently perused by gentlemen, it would have been totally unnecessary for him to make any remarks upon their contents; for the mismanagement of our marine appeared so glaringly from the evidence of those papers, that they required no elucidation. But care had been taken, that they should not come before the house in such time, that the members could have completely digested them before it was necessary to ground any resolution on them; and they were produced in such order, or rather disorder and confusion, that it was almost impossible, after a cursory reading by the clerks, to combine the different parts that related to each other. It was on this account only that he thought himself excusable in making a few observations, which he intended to confine to four different heads.

But before he would touch upon these heads, he judged it not improper to throw out a few ideas to the committee, on subjects, which, (though they were at present out of the bounds of the enquiry he intended

ned to pefa, the occurrences to which he fhould allude, happened out of the year 1781, (to which year he meant to fine the enquiry for the prefent) were by no means inapplicable to the great object of the enquiry. The instructions given Sir Charles Hardy, to prevent a junction of the French and nifh fleets, had not been laid before the Houfe; and he had mitted to it, though he was not convinced by the reasons en for with-holding them; but he muft needs fay, that if Sir arles was not ~~inducted~~ to prevent fuch a junction, though, he time alluded to, we were not at war with Spain, it was an pardonable, nay, a criminal neglect in the Admiralty. From papers juft read, it appeared indeed, that Admiral Geary had eived instructions for that purpofe; but it was at a time, when re was every degree of probability, nay, when it was known at the fleets, which he was to have kept afunder, had actually ned before he received his orders. Such had been the diligence the firft Lord of the Admiralty, fuch his attention to the in- eft of his country! Another thing very remarkable, that from e 1ft of January, 1779, to the beginning of March 1781, not one gle frigate had been ftationed off Breft, to watch the motions the enemy. This was a circumftance, which, he was convinced, en the greateft enemies to Lord Sandwich would fcarcely have lieved, if it did not ftand confirmed by the papers that had been ad; and what was ftill more fingular than this omiffion, or ther shameful neglect, that when frigates were fent in the month March to cruize off Breft, it was at a time when their cruize ould not be attended with any ufeul difcovery, for it was at a me when there was no armament carrying on in that port, all ie fquandrons which were intended for fea having long before uled for their different deftinations. He had moved for a lift of re fhips employed for the defence of Jerfey, at the time of the ttack upon that ifland; but the return made to his motion was ar from being fatisfactory, in fact it was no return at all; for hav- ag called for the fhips employed for the defence of the ifland at he time it was attacked, the return made was a lift of fhips fent o Jerfey, after the expedition againft it had mifcarried. Having aid thus much by way of preface, Mr. Fox came immediately to he year 1781; to the naval tranfactions of which year, he confined he enquiry. In this year, he found four principal heads of accu- ation againft Lord Sandwich.

1ft. That he fuffered Comte de Graffe to fail for the Weft- Indies, without making a fingle effort to intercept him. From the papers on the table, it was manifelt that he had had the belt and moft minute intelligence of the equipment, ftrength, and de- fignation of the force under that officer; it was equally clear that he knew the time, or very nearly, when the Comte was to fail; and yet not the leaft attempt was made to block up Breft; or give the enemy battle after they had fet out. There were two circum- ftances which in this cafe rendered the firft Lord of the Admiralty highly criminal: one was that the object of Comte de Graffe's ex- pedition was of the moft dangerous nature to this country: it was to deftroy its empire in the weft, and in fome meafure to blot the Britifh name out of the chronicles of the world; but great as thefe objects were, he was permitted to purfue them without the leaft

molestation on the part of Lord Sandwich. The other circumstance which rendered that naval Minister highly criminal was, that at the very time he had a force at sea, equal to the complete destruction of Comte de Grasse and his fleet. Admiral Darby was then at sea with thirty ships of the line, well equipped, well manned, and in the best condition. But the evil genius of England would have it that Lord Sandwich should send such orders to Admiral Darby, as must necessarily leave a free passage for Monsieur de Grasse; our fleet, consisting of thirty ~~ships~~ battle-ships, put to sea the 13th of March, 1781; the French Admiral, with twenty-five ships of the line, sailed the 22d; so that Admiral Darby had not been sent out of the way, there would have scarcely been a possibility of the latter avoiding an engagement with us, either before we got to Gibraltar, or on our return from it. But Lord Sandwich, as if fearing that the French should be destroyed, sent orders to Admiral Darby to cruise off the coast of Ireland, to wait for the store-ships and victuallers, that were to join him from Corke:—Here was he stationed till the 27th of March, before he was joined by the transports:—In the mean time, the French continued their voyage without the smallest interruption; and what was the consequence? he really wanted words to describe it; the consequence was as dreadful as if London had been burnt; we had lost our islands; Sir Samuel Hood had been defeated, or nearly so; and our losses and disgraces were completed by the surrender of Lord Cornwallis's army at York-Town. He desired Gentlemen to consider that the naval Minister had it in his power to prevent all these disasters, and to have crushed them in the very embryo, by sending Admiral Darby to meet Comte de Grasse; but that instead of doing it, he sent the British fleet to cruise in a quarter where it must be entirely out of the track of the French. He desired they would consider that it was not for want of intelligence of the designs, numbers and strength of the enemy, that he omitted sending Admiral Darby to meet Mons. de Grasse; but it was after having had the most correct intelligence on the subject, that he sent our fleet to Ireland. He desired gentlemen would consider, and say whether it was credible that it could have happened without treachery somewhere? But supposing treachery totally out of the question, those who should think so far favorably of Lord Sandwich, as to suppose him incapable of treachery, must still in candour admit, that from the evidence contained in the papers just read, that he was totally inadequate to the management of the navy of this country.—No one could conceive the reason why a fleet of 30 ships of the line should be sent out of their way to Ireland to meet the transports from Corke, which ought to have been ordered to join the fleet in the channel; if that had been the case, there was not a doubt but Admiral Darby would have given a good account of the French; and perhaps he might have arrived time enough to fall upon the rear of the Spanish fleet, which, after a cruise of two months, was returning in very foul condition, to Cadiz. It was a very great injury to our affairs, that Comte de Grasse should not have been intercepted in the European seas: but still, an able first Lord of the Admiralty might have seen, that it was not irreparable; for he might still have defeated the Comte's expedition, by a proper detachment from ~~his~~ ^{Darby's}

Darby's fleet. It was his business to have given orders to our commander to detach to the West-Indies, if it should so happen that the Spaniards should not dispute the passage of the Straights with us. A minister of common foresight would have said to his admiral, either the Spaniards will fight you on your way to Gibraltar, or they will not. If they should not, then you will immediately dispatch a part of your fleet to the West-Indies, to counteract the Comte de Grasse.—This would have been the language of a provident minister; but it was not the language of Lord Sandwich. If he had so instructed Admiral Darby, a detachment of clean English ships, without convoy, would have in all probability joined Sir Samuel Hood before the Comte's arrival; and in that case there was every degree of likelihood, that the French would have been defeated.

2d. The second head of accusation was the loss of the St. Eustatius convoy. It appeared, from the papers before the committee, that Sir George Rodney had written to the Admiralty about this convoy before it failed; and acquainted the board with the course it was to steer: this letter was received on the 25th of March. When it was received, it was well known to the first lord of the Admiralty, as the committee had learned from the papers, that a squadron was fitting out at Brest, the command of which was given to Mons. de la Motte Picquet. Admiral Darby was then lying off the coast of Ireland; but no orders were sent to him on the subject. Admiral Rodney's letter said, the Eustatius convoy was perhaps the richest that had ever been bound for England. Mr. Fox observed, that, as to the riches that were on board of it, when he considered how they had been acquired, they were the richest, the loss of which, of all others, he should least regret; it still, as it was the duty of the First Lord of the Admiralty to protect it, his neglect was alone sufficient to shew how disqualified he was for the office he held. The squadron under De la Motte Picquet had been a considerable time fitting out; very regular intelligence had been transmitted to the Admiralty, of the progress of the preparations during the months of February, March, and April; and yet not one step had been taken to guard against it: and this was the more criminal, as we were at the time in almost daily expectation of the arrival of the Jamaica, as well as the St. Eustatius fleet: no preparation, however, was made to afford them protection; and all that was done was, that two frigates had been dispatched to meet them if possible, warn them of their danger, and enable them to avoid it, if they could, by making some port in Ireland, or going north about. One of the frigates fortunately fell in with the Jamaica fleet, which accidentally escaped the danger; but the St. Eustatius convoy was taken, at least in part, on the 2d and 3d of May. The convoy had been expected ever since the receipt of Sir George Rodney's letter on the 25th of March, and Lord Sandwich knew of the preparations of Mons. de la Motte Picquet, from the beginning of February, and yet no step had been taken to protect the one, or defeat the other; nay, great was the negligence of the first Lord of the Admiralty, that he never thought of making Admiral Darby acquainted with the expected arrival of the St. Eustatius convoy, till the 10th of May; and then dispatched a frigate to him, to give him orders to fail

fail to a particular latitude, in order to protect a convoy, which had been taken just seven days before the frigate had been dispatched to him: how the probability was, that this frigate could not reach Admiral Darby in much less than a fortnight; so that near two months had elapsed between the receipt of Sir George Rodney's letter, giving notice of the sailing of the convoy, and the time when Admiral Darby got orders to sail for its protection. — He asked gentlemen, if this alone was not sufficient to justify any motion that he should think proper to make against the first Lord of the Admiralty? There was only one excuse, which however poor for a naval minister, ought to be admitted in such a case as the present; and that was, that he really had not any force sufficient to cope with Mons. de la Motte Piquet; but poor as this excuse must be in the mouth of an English naval minister, Lord Sandwich was not fortunate enough to have it; for it appeared from the monthly returns, that there were ships enough in port, which, from the month of March, when Sir George Rodney's letter gave notice of the intended sailing of the convoy from St. Eustatius, to the latter end of April, might have been got ready: he read a list of the ships, and, including one or two frigates, there appeared to have been in our different ports *twelve* sail of the line, a force sufficient to have defeated Mons. de la Motte Piquet: he read also the returns from the guardships, stating the numbers on board, from which he proved, that if we had ships, so also we had men to put on board of them: so that he concluded, that the loss of the convoy could and ought to be attributed only to the mismanagement, or something worse, of the first Lord of the Admiralty.

3d. The third head of accusation was the letter from the Admiralty to the Mayor of Bristol:—Admiral Darby, as appeared from the papers, had acquainted the Admiralty, that he had fallen in with a Swedish brig, the master of which had informed him, that he had been boarded by a frigate, under Spanish colours, belonging to the combined fleets, which were then in the channel; and that in consequence of this intelligence he had thought proper to return up the channel for orders; and had put into Torbay. And here it was to be observed, that the master of the brig was an Englishman, who would not deceive his country, and whose journal confirmed his story. How did the First Lord of the Admiralty answer this letter? In an insulting manner, telling the admiral he did not believe the intelligence; and adding if the account had been true that the combined fleets had appeared in such a latitude, he (Admiral Darby) must have seen them. In answer to the Mayor of Bristol, he said that the combined fleets were not in the channel, and that Admiral Darby had put into Torbay only to water. This he must have known at the time to have been a falsehood; for the admiral in his letter assigned a very different reason for returning into port, so that it looked as if the naval minister wanted to enquire the trade of Bristol by inducing the merchants to send their ships to sea, that he might deliver them into the hands of the enemy, just as he had sent Captain Moutray into the hands of Admiral Cordova. But to shew how completely the Admiralty either had been deceived itself, or had deceived the Mayor of Bristol, it appeared that Lord Stormont

had, on the very day of the date of the Admiralty letter to the Mayor, sent an express to Lord Carlisle, with positive intelligence that the enemy was in the channel.

4th. The fourth charge related to the management of the Dutch war. That war was, he said, of all foolish, absurd, and mad undertakings, the most foolish, the most absurd, and the most mad. It had been represented to that House, in order to get them to approve of the war, that the Dutch were in a most defenceless state; that there was a very great party for us in Holland; and that we had only to make a vigorous effort in the beginning, to give that party the superiority in the councils of the republic. Upon such a state of the case, would not any one have expected, that the naval minister would have signalized the outset of the Dutch war by an appearance of an English Squadron in the Texel? An attack might surely be expected to be attended with every success that we could wish for; but nothing was more foreign to the intention of Lord Sandwich: he suffered the enemy to equip those ships which he might have destroyed in the Texel; and then brought them to an action, which certainly redounded greatly to the honour of Admiral Parker and his officers, and of the enemy too; but which was far from ending in so decisive a victory as might have been expected, over an enemy who was represented as weak and enervated.—In this case also, as that of the St. Eustatius convoy, Lord Sandwich had many ships which he might have sent to reinforce Admiral Parker: the *Sampson*, of 64 guns, was one, which, instead of sending directly to the admiral, Lord Sandwich sent to the grand fleet, to which place she was to be sent for, if wanted. Here he took an opportunity to retract a thing which he had asserted, in a former debate, viz.—that it was mere chance that had made the *Berwick* fall in with the squadron in the North Sea. This he found not to be true, for it now appeared that it was by order of the Admiralty she had joined the squadron. The squadron under a very gallant friend of his, and a member of that House, (Keith Stewart) had been kept in the Downs for the purpose of watching the Dutch; how well they had been watched, the safe arrival of Admiral Byland had proclaimed to the world: yet in this, he presumed his gallant friend was not to blame; at least, he had never been called to an account for it.

As an epitome of all the other charges, he subjoined a fifth, drawn from the latest circumstance, that of the meeting between Admiral Kempenfelt and the Brest fleet. He read the names of the ships which might have been sent out to join our rear admiral; and which, including the squadron in the Downs, made about twenty sail of the line: with this force which might, he said, have been sent out, it was not to be doubted but through the known bravery and abilities of Admiral Kempenfelt, we should have completely destroyed the French fleet and convoy.

He concluded, by observing, as he had done already on a former occasion, that his first motion ought to be for a removal of Lord Sandwich from his Majesty's councils; but he thought it inexpedient now; he would first move a censure upon him, and if he should carry that, he would follow it up with an address to the King; which no doubt would have its effects; and then undoubtedly, he would pursue the enquiry through every part, when

the minister whose administration should be the subject of it, should no longer be vested with the power to defeat it. He then moved the following resolution—"That it appears to this committee, "that there was gross mismanagement in the administration of "naval affairs, in the year 1781."

Lord Mulgrave. Lord Mulgrave expressed his surprise at hearing a motion which could not be passed but in direct opposition to the mass of evidence, which the Committee had heard read. He trusted, however, that though there had been found one member who was not afraid to fly so openly in the face of evidence, there would be very few who would support him. In common questions in that House, gentlemen might make it a point to adhere to their leader, and carry him through with every thing he proposed: but in such a case as the present, he conjured gentlemen to reflect how improper, how unjust, how unfair, it would be to pursue such a principle, when the private honour, character, situation, and fortune of an individual was at stake: upon these they were going to give judgment; and he trusted that all party considerations would be absorbed in the sense of their own private honour and conscience; and that the principle of Mr. Grenville's law in the decision on contested elections would be found to operate in the present case. Much had been suggested about treachery; to that he would make no reply, because he was convinced that no one in that House believed it, nay not even the accuser himself. Much had also, on many occasions, been said of the regard the noble Earl, whose conduct was the subject of the enquiry, had for situation, and the great desire he had to retain and preserve it: but might it not be inferred from this, that it was improbable he should do any thing, by which he might forfeit that situation? if he had an interest in preserving it, might not those who charged him with mismanagement have an interest in driving him from that situation? They certainly might: and therefore gentlemen should be on their guard, lest they should mistake in the enemies of Lord Sandwich, a fondness for his situation, for a love of justice.

The hon. member blamed the Admiralty for not having stationed frigates off Brest, from January 1779 to March 1781. The fact was truly stated, but no charge ought to be deduced from it; because little or no intelligence could be procured by frigates looking into Brest, unless they had been there stationed from a squadron, as it were, to dare the enemy to come out; the reason why, in other cases, no benefit could be derived was this, the frigate must pass by Ushant, and immediately signals would be made along the coast to Brest, to give notice of every thing that was in the offing; and ships would be sent out to drive away the frigate.—Another charge made by the hon. member was, that no ships had been stationed off Jersey to protect that island. If the gentleman knew what a dangerous station it was for men of war, he would not be surprized that there were none stationed there in winter. The people on the island had been always given to understand, that in case of a sudden invasion, they must trust to the forces on the island for defence in the first instance; and that, on the first intimation in England of their danger, relief should be instantly dispatched to them,

With respect to his first great charge, relative to the sailing of Comte de Grasse, the evidence which had been read, sufficiently pointed out a reason why he had not been intercepted. The relief of Gibraltar was looked for by the whole nation; and from the best intelligence, which the committee had heard read, it was understood that the Spaniards intended to meet us, and give us battle. The intelligence, as the committee had heard, had held this language for two months: the Spanish force was sometimes varied in the accounts; but the force was generally fluctuating from 30 to 36 sail of the line, besides frigates, and 18 fire-ships, collected for the purpose of burning the British fleet in passing through the Streights. To oppose such a force, it was highly necessary to get together a fleet that should put it out of the power of chance to defeat our expedition: such a force was collected; and would it have been prudent to have risked the loss of Gibraltar on the bare chance of meeting with Mons. de Grasse? Would it have been consistent with the spirit of the nation, to have taken any step that would look as if we had been bullied out of our purpose of relieving Gibraltar, after the Spaniards had in a manner challenged us, after they had thrown down the gauntlet, when they drew their fleet in line of battle across the mouth of the Streights? All Europe looked at the time for an engagement between the two fleets; the Spaniards were sure of it; and, when the British fleet appeared in sight of Gibraltar, the besiegers could scarcely believe their eyes; and on that day they first opened their batteries against the town. In the mean time our fleet in the West-Indies had not been forgotten; information was dispatched to Sir Samuel Hood by a frigate, of the sailing of Comte de Grasse; and when the latter arrived, he did not feel himself so superior as the hon. member seemed to represent him, for he three days constantly refused the challenge which Sir Samuel was daily giving him to renew the engagement. But, the hon. member would say, why were not some ships detached to the West-Indies from Admiral Darby's fleet? The reason was obvious; it was upon that fleet alone we had to depend for the defence of our coasts, the protection of the Channel, the safety of our convoys, and the annoyance of the Dutch.

As to the second charge, the loss of the St. Eustatius convoy; he would say that there had been much more reason to suppose that Mons. de la Motte Piquet was bound for America, than for the coast of Ireland; but that as soon as his real destination was known, two frigates had been dispatched to meet the Jamaica fleet and the St. Eustatius convoy: one of them was fortunate enough to fall in with the former, which went north about, and escaped all danger: unfortunately the other frigate did not meet with Commodore Hotham; and the misfortune, which it was the wish of the Admiralty to avert, fell upon the convoy. The honourable member ridiculed the idea of sending a frigate to Admiral Darby long after the capture of the convoy; but the convoy was very near being re-taken; for as soon as the frigate reached the fleet, Admiral Darby was detached with ten-sail to look out for Mons. de la Motte Piquet; and he came so near him, that one night a ship of each squadron had a very sharp engagement.

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The third charge, relative to the combined fleets, and the letter to the mayor of Bristol, was of much less weight than the gentleman seemed to think; and, first, as to the combined fleets, the master of a brig said he had been boarded by a Spanish frigate, and that she belonged to a very large fleet of men of war; the Admiralty did not believe the intelligence. Truly it would be a dangerous thing to be in office, if a minister was to have a charge made against him in parliament every time he should be found not to have believed the story that should have been told him by a merchantman! Oh! but the master of the brig was an Englishman, and therefore his intelligence might be relied on. This war had afforded instances that an Englishman could betray England as well as an enemy could. Well, but his journal confirmed his story. Yes; but it was possible it might have been made for the very purpose of confirming the story. The reason why the Admiralty did not believe the intelligence, was, that it was directly contrary to the whole tenor of the information they had from Spain; from which it was conjectured, that most probably a part of the fleet was cruising off Cape Spartel, while another part was sent to Minorca. On the other hand, the Admiralty supposing the master of the brig not to have imposed upon Admiral Darby, accounted for the fleet he had seen at a great distance, in this manner: just about that time a very large convoy of 100 sail of transports was to sail from the isle of Rhé, and might at the time be just in the latitude, in which the master of the brig said he saw a large fleet. It was upon this principle that the answer to the mayor of Bristol was made, and not for the purpose of decoying the trade of Bristol into the hands of the enemy, just as Captain Moutray, as the honourable member was pleased to say, had been sent to deliver up his convoy to the Spaniards. As to Capt. Moutray, (it was with real concern of mind he said it) he was censured by his judges for his conduct in that affair; and indeed it was not without pain that he heard that officer's name mentioned so often with very little respect; because, until that fatal day, when he lost his convoy, his name stood high and unblemished in his profession; and, therefore, he had rather pass his name over in silence, than speak disrespectfully of a very gallant officer. The loss of the convoy might be attributed to the merchants, who had ordered their ships to touch at Madeira for wine. He did not blame Admiral Darby for returning to port for orders; on the contrary, he thought he acted for the good of the service, and consistently with that judgment and skill which he displayed in the expedition to Gibraltar. There were two reasons, why he would neither blame the first Lord of the Admiralty, for having told the mayor of Bristol, that the fleet had put into Torbay, only to water—One was, that he did not think it necessary, that the mayor should be made acquainted with the *resolutions* of our manœuvres at sea—The other was, that the admiral had, in one of his letters said, he would put to sea again with the first fair wind: this did not look like an intention in him to remain cooped up in Torbay.

The fourth charge had perhaps less in it than any of the former. The reason Admiral Parker did not stop before the Texel to pre-

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ent the Dutch from coming out, was, that he had a very great convoy to carry out, and another still more valuable to bring home: perhaps indeed this latter might be called the most valuable that had ever reached England; for it brought us home naval supplies of all sorts, sufficient for the exigencies of our whole navy for two years. He was free to confess at the same time he did not think it would be a very great mark of prudence in government to station a fleet in the Texel; he had never indeed served in the North Seas; but still was of opinion, the Texel would be too dangerous a station for a squadron. The uncertainty of the latitude in which the Vice-Admiral might be met with, was the reason why the Sampson had not been sent to him directly: but she was sent to the Gun Fleet, where the admiral was acquainted by a frigate, which sailed before the Sampson was ready, she might be found, if he should stand in need of her. His Lordship expressed his satisfaction, that the hon. member had discovered his error, with respect to the Berwick: from that circumstance however, he hoped gentlemen would learn not to trust much to the hon. member's assertions, as they had now a proof that he often made them without any grounds; and he flattered himself that they would require sufficient evidence for every assertion made; though evidence was a thing which the hon. member did not seem much inclined to wish for; it was his worst enemy, as it detected in many instances, where he expected that his friends would swallow his assertions, for proofs; they had now a very recent instance that if they did, they would be the dupes of their own credulity.

With regard to Admiral Kempenfelt's cruize nothing new came out; that subject was so much discussed before the holidays, that not any light was thrown upon it.

As to the hon. Commodore (Stewart) to whom the hon. member had alluded, his character did not stand in need of his praise; and therefore it was unnecessary for him to say, that he was a gallant and an able officer. If the station, in which he had been placed by the Admiralty, had not appeared to him the most proper for watching the Dutch, he would have remonstrated against that station; and as he did not remonstrate against it, it was flattering to the board that an officer of his skill and judgment should approve of the station. If, on the other hand, he did not intercept Admiral Byland, there was every reason to believe from the zeal, activity, gallantry, and skill of that Commodore, that it was because the thing was impossible. Gentlemen would consider that tracks at sea were not like roads on shore, where there were turnpikes, at which those whom we might wish to secure must pass.

His Lordship concluded by observing that the Committee was going to pronounce on the character of an old and faithful servant of the crown; and as he trusted that in either acquitting or condemning him they would be swayed only by evidence, so he trusted that they would find in the papers that had been read to them, ample evidence of the innocence, merit and activity of the Earl of Sandwich.

Mr. Alderman *Newnham* complimented Lord Mulgrave on the Alderman ingenious defence of his friend, and said it did justice both to his *Newnham* head and to his heart. He blamed Admiralty for having so far given

given way to the merchants, as to suffer their ships to touch at Madeira; the sailing of the convoy under captain Moutray, towards that island, had been the ruin of many men of property in London. He begged leave to meet the noble Lord on his own ground about a turnpike. If there was a possibility of such a thing, the Admiralty had caused the convoy under capt. Moutray to sail to that turnpike, where the enemy was waiting; or they would never have suffered the fleet to sail for Madeira, to take in wine. Could not a few ships have gone there and loaded, and afterwards joined the fleet, instead of taking the whole fleet there? surely they could; and he was firmly of opinion, that the trade of Bristol was meant to have been sacrificed to the enemy; at least the Admiralty did all that lay in their power to do it.

Lord Howe. Lord Howe apologized to the committee for not being so well acquainted with the contents of the papers on the table as he could wish; but from what he had heard in the course of the debate, as well as from the extracts which were read, he begged leave to offer some remarks. In the article of frigates being stationed to watch off Brest, he had the misfortune, he said, of differing with the noble Lord on the floor, (Lord Mulgrave) even in his professional line, as he looked upon frigates sometimes to be necessary, and sometimes to be used with safety. No doubt quicker and more certain intelligence was generally to be gained over land, but frigates could tell whether an enemy had sailed out of harbour or not, and consequently give that intelligence to the main fleet.

From this his lordship animadverted rather to what a Board of Admiralty should do, than what the present Board of Admiralty had done. Here he went into a number of naval minutiae, in which he seemed to shew great professional knowledge and observation; he particularly observed, that much should be left to the discretion of a commanding officer of tried skill and integrity, as so many things depended on the instant, which the Board of Admiralty could not possibly know of, which, if neglected, the same occasion might never occur; he seemed to apply this last remark to the conduct of Admiralty towards Admiral Darby, as if sufficient powers were not given him at the time he put into Torbay, when the combined fleets were out. On this point his lordship took occasion to mention an anecdote of Admiral Darby, very much to his honour; he said, that when that Admiral was but a lieutenant of the second deck under Admiral Rowley, he was pointed out to him, after a very severe action, as an officer of such distinguished merit, that though all over bruised and wounded with the splinters occasioned by a cannon ball, he refused being carried down to be dressed, but stood to his quarters during the whole of the action.

This he thought it his duty to mention on the present occasion, and to remark at the same time, how mortifying it must be to a brave man to fly from an enemy. To decline fighting he observed was in some respects a degree of prudence, but though we were unhappily engaged in so general a war, it could not be always defensive, the time would come, when we must act on the offensive, let the risque be never so great, and perhaps it was better to do it in time, lest the consequences may be more fatal.

In respect to the affair of Admiral Kempenfelt, he saw it in quite a different light to what the noble Lord did. If an enemy was

was preparing a force, no matter of what description, it was the business of the Board of Admiralty to know, as far as they could, what that force consisted of; and if they could not precisely ascertain that, to take care to send out a fleet rather superior than otherwise. But it appeared that the Admiralty knew of 17 or 18 sail being in readiness; they therefore had a right to conclude a junction of the whole, and be prepared for them. No such conduct, he observed, had been adopted; on the contrary, twelve sail of the line only were sent, and the excuse for that small number was, that no more ships could be spared. Admitting this last excuse to be true, he then would ask, why they were sent at all? as it was confessed by the noble Lord it was very uncertain whether they could meet with *Mons. Vaudreuil*; and he could add, having met with *Mons. Vaudreuil*, it was very providential they were not all captured.

Before the noble Lord sat down, he called on Lord Mulgrave to satisfy him in this last particular, as he would be governed in giving his assent or dissent to the motion in consequence.

Lord *Mulgrave* said, he always listened to the noble Lord with Lord *Mulgrave* great attention and respect, and only differed from him on points *grave*. in which he could not be convinced. He then replied to the question relative to Admiral *Kempensfelt*, in which he did little more than re-state the reasons he gave at first.

Lord *Howe* said those reasons were not satisfactory to him. Lord *Howe*.

Mr. *Webb* condemned the Admiralty as usual, but particularly Mr. *Webb* with respect to ship building in merchants yards. He said he was glad to find that what he had said before on the occasion had produced a good effect; for now he found that contracts had been made in all the yards in the river; in one for a ship of 90 guns.—There were a great many ships on the stocks—he had a list of them in his hand: they amounted to 35; but he believed not more than ten of them could be launched this war, were it to last for seven years. The *Royal Sovereign* at Plymouth had been in her frame these seven years, and was now completely rotten. He would recommend it to the board to give some expedition money to the builders, and they being enabled to employ more hands, and give better wages, would launch ships in a very short time; by these means the *Shrewsbury* had been built and launched in 14 months. A builder at Bristol had built, with great dispatch, a ship of 50 guns, and was promised a contract for another of 64 guns; but when the former was completed, he could not obtain the contract for the second, though, on the promise of it, he had purchased 10,000*l.* worth of timber; and now the yard lay idle. Much had been said about the high price that Mr. Wells had demanded; from what had been said, he really had imagined that the price was exorbitant: how greatly, therefore, was he surprised to find it was no more than two shillings and sixpence per ton, the price for ships of 74 guns being 17*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* for ships of 64, 17*l.* 10*s.* It had been said, that the proud stomach of Mr. Wells had been brought down; but in fact it was the proud stomach of the Admiralty, that had been brought down, by coming up within 2*s.* 6*d.* of Mr. Wells's price: the navy was the only, at least the principal instrument of our safety; and as he found it did not increase in the

hands of the present first Lord of the Admiralty, he would vote for the motion.

Mr. John Townshend. Mr. *John Townshend* spoke for a considerable time in favour of the motion. Reprobated the First Lord of the Admiralty for sending out a frigate to desire our fleet to go North about, which was, he said, a plain indication to them, that we were not able to send a force able to cope with six sail of the line. He reminded the House of Lord Sandwich's declaration in the House of Lords, and affirmed, that he was confident our navy could never flourish while he was at the head of it, as most of our able admirals were driven from the service.

Mr. Penton. Mr. *Penton* rose, and defended Lord Sandwich on nearly the same grounds that Lord Mulgrave did. He insisted, that the whole force of the nation had been exerted, according to the best advice the Admiralty could get.

Mr. Pitt. Mr. *Pitt* shewed the fallacy of Mr. *Penton*'s argument respecting the whole force being employed, when it was plainly proved, that a considerable part of our marine lay idle at the time the small reinforcements were wanting; he was of opinion, that a motion to remove the First Lord of the Admiralty would have been much better.

Lord North. Lord *North* got up to give his negative to the motion; he declared, that Lord Sandwich, since his coming into office, had got a better supply of timber, a greater number of ships, than were employed last war, and had proved himself a steady friend to the public.—It was unfair, unjust, and by no means candid to decide upon his merit by a partial enquiry of four facts, which had been stated, but what he by no means would allow to be proved. He was of opinion, the motion for Lord Sandwich's removal was far more just than the present one, which seemed to be framed and determined upon before the papers to give the information were read. The noble Lord admitted that many of our best officers were unemployed, and disgusted, but it by no means appeared that they had any just cause for their disgust. Ministers were charged on mere suspicion: no proof whatever was given, and upon this conjectural accusation the House must decide.

Ad. Keppel. Admiral *Keppel* confirmed Lord Howe in every argument he made use of, and gave his hearty assent to the motion.

E. Deering. Sir *Edward Deering* spoke against the motion.

Mr. Pitt. Mr. *Pitt* rose, and explained several matters that had been misrepresented by Lord North. After which

Sir Fletcher Norton. Sir *Fletcher Norton* got up, and declared to the House, that it was his intention not to have spoke upon the occasion, but to have left it to more able hands; but when he observed professional men, and those of the first authority, give their sentiments, so corresponding with his own, he could not sit and give a silent vote. He then entered into the business with much judgment, and gave his hearty assent to the motion.

Mr. Sheridan. Mr. *Sheridan* spoke with great energy, and commented on what had fallen from Lord North; particularly in the expression, that though there were many of the best officers disgusted, they had no cause of disgust. He condemned the noble Lord, in pointed terms, for expressing such language, at a time when that House, and all the world knew and felt the treatment which the veteran commanders

commanders of the fleet had experienced. The hon. gentleman, with most forcible expression, declared his abhorrence of language so disrespectful and unbecoming, after their shameless behaviour, by which their country had, in its worst moments, lost the benefit of assistance from such distinguished characters as a Keppel, a Howe, a Barrington, a Parker, a Harland, a Pigot, a Byron, and all the others whom they had driven into retirement. He repeated many of the gallant actions of these men, and spoke in high terms of the just influence which they possessed in the navy, and the credit which they had with the people.—The present was a time to speak out. Men must not now, from reasons of personal prudence, keep from the knowledge of their country, the reasons which induced, or which constrained them to relinquish the service. There were several of these officers then present in the House, and he hoped they would now rise, fired at the insult offered them by the expression of the noble Lord in the blue ribband, and explain fully and clearly the reasons which they had for withdrawing. One of those admirals (Keppel) had given that explanation. His reasons had been too evident to require disclosure; but there were other distinguished admirals in the House who had not been so explicit, and of whom all the world entertained the highest opinion. From their accounts the House would see whether there was either decency or modesty in the language of the noble Lord; and also whether, after such behaviour to men so eminent, it would be either just or prudent to suffer the Earl of Sandwich to continue in place; for he was a man born for the destruction of the British navy.

Admiral Pigot, after some pause, evidently intended for Lord Admiral Pigot, rose, and stated in a manly and clear manner the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty towards him; by which it appeared that Lord Sandwich, having first solicited him to serve in the most flattering terms, had offered him a command by letter which he had the day before given to another officer, Admiral Gambier;—that afterwards, on the breaking out of the French war, on Admiral Pigot's renewing his offers to serve, the First Lord of the Admiralty asked him directly for his interest in the India-House, the charge of the murder of Lord Pigot, his brother, being then brought against the friends of Lord Sandwich. On the admiral's refusing, Lord S. told him, with a sneer, that he would acquaint his Majesty of his readiness to serve him,—and from that hour he was never applied to more!

After some further debate, Mr. Fox rose again, and concluded Mr. Fox, the whole in a speech of considerable length, in which he animadverted with his wonderful powers on the weak, puerile, and absurd arguments advanced in contradiction of his motion. He particularly adverted to the arguments and assertions of Lord Mulgrave, and after replying to every material matter, that had arisen in the course of the debate, concluded with a forcible appeal to the independent members of the House to assert their privilege, and by a full and manifest declaration of their sentiments, be instrumental to the salvation of their country.

The committee divided — Ayes 183
Noes 205

Majority — 22

Speaker. The *Speaker* then resumed the chair, and the House adjourned.
 FEB. 8. Being the day appointed for the general fast, attended divine service.

Sir Joseph Marubey- Feb. 11. *Sir Joseph Marubey* moved, that the call of the House be adjourned to this day fortnight.

This motion brought on a tedious conversation, some members desiring that the House might be then called over; others wishing to have it adjourned, that it might be still kept hanging over the heads of members, in order to enforce attendance. The House at last divided, when there appeared

For the motion 53. Against it 46.

The order of course remained for calling the House over then.

Mr. Stephen- *Mr. Stephen* moved that the order be discharged. This renewed the contest. *Mr. T. Townshend* said he had no objection to the motion, if the honourable member meant nothing more by it than to have the order discharged, that a new order might be made for the call on some other day: but if by his motion he intended to get totally rid of the call, he would certainly oppose it. After several members had spoken for and against the motion, it was withdrawn, and another was made that the House be called over on Thursday se'nnight. This brought on another division, when it was carried by a majority of—7.

Ayes 105 Noes 98

Mr. Fox. *Mr. Fox* made a complaint to the House of (what he called) a very serious nature. A petition had been presented by one John Saunders, against the return of the present members for the borough of Hindon: that *Mr. Saunders*, it seems, had pledged himself to the electors not to withdraw his petition, but let it go to a committee; and the electors who wished to have it tried by a committee had given him (*Mr. Fox*) to understand that the consequence would have been, that the seat of, at least, one of the sitting members would undoubtedly have been vacated. However, the electors had learned that this same *Mr. Saunders* had at length agreed to withdraw his petition, and they had applied to him to oppose any motion for the purpose in the house: he had promised them he would; and as he meant to perform his promise, so was greatly surprised to find, on coming into the House at about a quarter after four o'clock, that the motion which he had promised to oppose, had been already made, and the desired leave given to withdraw the petition, the sitting members having expressed (very willingly, no doubt) their consent on the occasion. The whole affair looked like a collusion; and he was of opinion that the House ought to come to a resolution, that no petition complaining of an undue election should be withdrawn, unless a sufficient reason should be assigned to the House for withdrawing it, and unless one day's notice, at least, should be given of the intention of moving for leave to withdraw it.

Speaker. The *Speaker* said, the motion for withdrawing the petition had been given to him, as soon as he had taken the chair, at half past two o'clock; but that he had kept it back, till it was past three o'clock, and until he thought there was no more business to come before the House.

Barre. Colonel *Barre* desired to know when the extraordinaries of the army should be brought before the House. He observed, that as they

they were made up from February to February, it was surely time, that on the 11th of February, they should be on the table. At least he thought that the gross sums might have been long since made up. There was now and then a day, when but little business was done in the House; gentlemen might therefore avail themselves of this circumstance, to read, and make themselves acquainted with the estimates, if they had been before the House.

Lord North said the accounts were making out as fast as possible; Lord North and that as soon as they were ready, they should be laid upon the table: he could not tell the precise day when they could be produced to the House; but he believed they would be brought up in a day or two.

Feb. 12. The *Secretary at War* brought in a bill relative to *Secretary at War* balloting for men to serve in the militia, during the summer; and it was read the first time.

Sir George Yonge rose, but not to oppose the bill in its present stage; he said he could not, however, remain silent after a bill had been read which was calculated to subject the counties to new hardships respecting the militia; such a bill, in his opinion, ought not to pass, unless some very cogent reasons were first urged to the House. On a former occasion he had expressed a desire to have some papers laid upon the table, which would throw some light upon the subject matter of the bill; but his desire had not yet been gratified: his motive for rising at present was to enquire of the right honourable member on what day he intended to move for the second reading?

The *Secretary at War* admitted that the bill would impose new hardships on the different counties; and the only excuse he had for wishing to impose them was, that the public service, and the situation of affairs absolutely called for such measures, as the bill proposed. As to the papers mentioned by the honourable member, though they were not ordered by the House, he had nevertheless given directions, that they should be copied; and as they would be ready in a few days, the honourable member's desire would of course shortly be gratified. But as it was necessary, that if the bill passed at all, it should pass speedily; he requested that the honourable member would not oppose the second reading; but reserve himself for some other stage of the bill, when he trusted the papers which he should shortly have the perusal of, would remove his difficulties.

Sir George Yonge had no objection to comply with Mr. Jenkinson's request; he said, that perhaps the perusal of those papers would alter his opinion; and if he could be convinced that the exigencies of the times absolutely required such a bill, he would give way to the state necessity, and withdraw all opposition.

Mr. Pennyman gave notice, that on a future day he would move for leave to bring in a bill for effecting a reconciliation with America, and consolidating the wealth and strength of the British empire.

Feb. 13. About a quarter before four o'clock, the House resolved itself into a committee, to consider further of the supply granted to his Majesty. Mr. Ord then took the chair of the committee, and,

Lord

Lord Lif-
borne.

Lord *Lifborne* rose to move several resolutions for various sums of money, under the different heads of rebuilding, repairs, &c. of ships; and in general, for the ordinary and extraordinary expences of the navy for the year 1782. His Lordship stated, that the estimates for the ordinary of the navy for the current year, exceeded those of the last, by 23,000 l. and he accounted for this excess, by stating, that it had been occasioned by the great number of officers, who had been put on the superannuated list, by pensions given to officers disabled in the service, and to the widows of those who had been slain in it. The extraordinaries of the current year exceeded those of the last by a very considerable sum indeed, no less than 209,000 l. This excess arose, he said, from the very great number of ships repaired, and getting ready for public service. After this short explanation, his Lordship moved his first resolution.

Capt. Min-
chin.

Capt. *Minchin* descanted a considerable time on the immensity of money that had been voted for the navy, and the comparatively shameful state in which it now appeared. The money that had been voted was, he said, either not applied at all, or misapplied in the most shameful manner. In the reign of King William, the navy of England had been doubled; and not more than 900,000 l. had been expended for that purpose: and in the present year, the bare estimates for extraordinaries, for 12 months only, exceeded that sum. So many millions had been voted for the navy, during the administration of Lord Sandwich, that if the whole navy of England had been annihilated when that administration began, Lord Sandwich, with the sums voted to him, might have built a completely new navy: and yet, after all the liberality of Parliament, there were no more than ninety-two ships of the line fit for service this year.—It had been a practice, he observed, with the present admiralty to patch up ships (merely to deceive the public) and send them to sea, when they were really unfit for service. The *Blenheim*, of 90 guns, had been equipped, and ordered to join the fleet at the time of the grand naval review; and such was her condition at that juncture, that merely to attempt to join the fleet was, to her officers and men, a much more dangerous service than any they could have been sent upon in any other ship; where the danger from the enemies was the only one to be apprehended: she was ordered back again to port after the review, and there she remained ever since, totally unserviceable to the public; and thus whatever money had been expended on her, previous to the review, was entirely lost.—The *Arrogant* appeared upon the estimates for four or five years back; and yet it was not till lately that she was made fit for service; had the Admiralty been more diligent, and got this ship and one or two more in readiness, time enough to have joined Admiral Geary, that officer might have seen Captain Moutray and his convoy out of danger; and perhaps, by falling in with the Spanish fleet, have put an end to the Spanish war, at a blow.—The *Thunderer* and *Stirling-castle*, the loss of which had plunged many families into grief and mourning, were in such a state of repair, that he was informed by many expert seamen, that they were convinced these ships might have weathered out the storm in which they were lost, if they had not been sent to sea, when their condition was much better suited to a dock, than the sea. From such mismanagement as he discovered throughout the whole conduct of the

the First Lord of the Admiralty, he could no longer repose confidence in him; and therefore he was determined not to vote a shilling, of which he should have the management.

Captain *John Luttrell* not seeing the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty in the same point of view, did not think him criminal or reprehensible; and therefore he would vote for the estimates on the table; with a thorough conviction that the money the committee was going to vote, would not be misapplied: he knew the diligence and attention of the noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty; and upon comparing his administration with any former one, he found the comparison to be in favour of that noble Lord: the immense quantity of stores with which all the yards abounded, bore ample testimony to the foresight, prudence, and attention of the naval minister; and, for one, he felt himself bound to thank him for laying in supplies, which the greatest exigencies of the state could not, for a very considerable time, exhaust.—He then took a comparative view of the state of the navy in the year 1762, and in 1781, and drew a conclusion greatly favourable to the administration of Lord Sandwich. He admitted that, perhaps, we might have had a few ships more than we have, but the blame lay, in his opinion, on the ship-builders in the private yards, who had refused to work, unless the Admiralty would comply with their exorbitant demands; and if the board resisted those demands, it was a proof of their economy, and good husbanding of the public money.

Sir *George Yonge* was so far from joining the last speaker in his praise of this species of economy, that he most heartily condemned it; for he observed, that whilst we were saving a little paltry sum on one hand, we were losing millions on the other: at 17l. 10s. per ton, we were able to get ships built in three years, or three and a half; and at 20l. per ton, we might have them launched within the year: thus, to save 50s. a ton, we deprived ourselves of those ships which might be soon got ready; and which would enable us to put a glorious end to the war, and of course to the annual expenditure of 24 millions: such economy was culpable, and he was surprised that it could enter into any man's head, to praise the Admiralty for it. For his part, he wished that some expedient could be adopted, for adding to the numbers of ship carpenters and others already employed in the dock-yards: this, he said, might be done, by introducing house-carpenters, and making the shipwrights take apprentices.

Mr. *Penton* assured the hon. member that the board of Admiralty would hold themselves obliged to him, if he would suggest some plan, by which the number of workmen in our yards might be usefully increased: if such a plan could be found as should promise success, the hon. gentleman could not be more ready to repose, than the board of Admiralty would be to adopt it. Many schemes had been thought of; but the most likely plan which was meant to be adopted, or at least in his opinion deserved to be so, was to force the private builders to take apprentices; or now they drained the royal yards of their men, by giving them more wages.

Mr. *Hussey* could not read the estimates on the table with comparative patience: they were shamefully exorbitant; and they were drawn

drawn up in a manner to impose upon the public: from those estimates the committee might be led to think that nine new ships would be launched this year by government; but it was clear that this was an imposition, as three of them were to be launched *for not by government*; these were the Ganges, Carnatic, and Bombay Castle, voted by the India company: so that we were to have fewer ships of the line in our service this year, than in the last, yet the expences were increasing: this was an insult to the nation, and to common sense. He found in the estimates, that though the India company made a present of the hulls, masts, and yards of the above three men of war, yet there was a charge of 1500l. for each of these ships, merely in that state, in which the company intended to deliver them to government, free of all expence (Col. Barre suggested to him that there was a charge in the estimates of 33,000l. for these ships.) He then complained of the slowness of our proceedings in building and equipping our ships; and he could not help acquainting the committee, by way of contrast, with a circumstance which had lately come to his knowledge: an English gentleman had been some time ago at Brest; and being on a footing of intimacy with a French officer, belonging to the dock-yard, he told him he should be glad to see the yard, if a stranger, and particularly an Englishman, could at that time be gratified with such a sight; he at the same time expressed his fear to the French officer, that he had urged an improper request: the latter, however, assured him that he had not, saying, that if such a request had been made during the last war, it could not have been complied with, because it would have been impolitic to discover the poverty of France at that period.— But as her yards and her navy were at present in the most flourishing condition, it was her interest that her enemies should see with their own eyes a sight as glorious to France, as it must be mortifying to England. He then took the English gentleman into the yard, from whence he saw a ship of the line afloat, which had been launched only a few days before. The French officer assured him, that no more than 95 days had elapsed between the time when her keel was laid, and the time when she was launched. In 10 days more she was completely rigged, ~~had~~ taken in her guns and provisions for six months, and was ready to sail at a moment's warning.—

The former part of the story, relative to the 95 days, he gave only on trust, as he had only the French officer's word for it; but of the latter circumstance, namely, that she was completely fit to go to sea ten days after she was launched, he could give proof at the bar; his friend had been an eye witness to the fact; and he did not know but he might be able to prevail ~~on~~ him to prove it to the House; at present, the gentleman had this objection to appearing at the bar, that he was afraid he should make enemies to himself. If the French could build with such expedition, what was the reason that we could not do so too?—It was not for want of money; it was not for want of materials; it must be for want of exertion and diligence: and yet, if ever there was a war in which exertion and diligence were necessary, it was the present. What would the Admiralty do, if the report relative to the force in the Texel should be true? The report was, that there were 30

men of war of different rates, and 100 transports, with each a lieutenant and some military force on board; and that the whole convoy were to sail together, and force their way down the Channel.

Lord *Mulgrave* observed, with respect to the three ships, pre- Lord *Mulgrave*.
sents from the India Company, he must inform the honour-
able member, that though the hulls, masts, and yards were to be paid for by the company, still there were always a great many things wanted in the body of the ship, and which were not to be furnished by the company, nor yet came within the estimate for rigging and provisions: and these things would cost, according to estimate, about 1500*l.* per ship, which added to 9000*l.* some odd hundreds per ship for rigging and provisions, would produce nearly the sum suggested by a right hon. member of 33,000*l.* in all.

Mr. *Holdsworth* held the Admiralty to be highly reprehensible, Mr. *Holdsworth*.
in a variety of instances. In the sale of the rigging, &c. of prizes taken from the enemy, he found practices prevailed which were a scandal to the board. He said it was customary to cut the rigging to pieces, and sell it for rope-yarn. He particularly mentioned this to have been done with the rigging of the Gibraltar, when she was brought into port, after having been taken by Admiral Rodney from the Spaniards: her rigging was then in very good condition, and yet it was cut up; her cables were as good as new; nay, some of them had never been used; and these fine cables, better than any that had been afterwards put on board her, were cut to pieces, and sold almost as lumber; and she was detained in port, to the great detriment of the service, for other cables, not half so good as those which had been cut up.

There was another great cause of complaint in the sale of ships belonging to Government; whenever one was set up to sale, there was always a combination of persons who bid for her, to the exclusion of any others; thus she was sold, perhaps, for 800*l.* and immediately after was set up by the persons concerned in the combination, who sold her again for 1600*l.* and divided the profit among themselves.

The power that the workmen had to carry away chips, was not founded in oeconomy, for he had reason to think that much serviceable timber was destroyed, and much time lost to the public, by the workmen making chips for themselves. At the sales of lumber, in the yards, he was convinced that many very serviceable articles were disposed of under that name, and for a trifle; and afterwards sold back again to Government for the full value. In the transport service there was great fault to be found, because in that department there was shameful prodigality of the public money: he knew one instance, where a transport, hired at 120*l.* per month, had 200*l.* worth of oats to carry to America; she was out more than 16 months; so that the carriage of 200*l.* worth of corn had really cost the nation upwards of 2000*l.* These were public grievances, which were suffered under the present Admiralty; and as they were of the most serious nature, so he could no longer trust an Admiralty that tolerated, or connived at them.

Mr. *Fox* said that a circumstance had occurred to his mind, Mr. *Fox*.
which he did not think of at the time when the debate of Thursday last was concluded; and that was—that the resolution he had

that day moved in the committee, relative to the mismanagement of the navy, could not be entered in the Journals; as the proceedings of a committee must be reported to the House, before they can find their way into the Journals; and as in the case he alluded to, the committee had not come to any resolution, his motion having been negatived, there was, of course nothing for the committee to report. He was resolved, however, at all events, that his motion should appear upon record; and therefore he then gave notice, that on Wednesday next, he would move in the House, a resolution, substantially, if not literally the same, as that which, on Thursday last had been rejected in the committee.

Lord Mulgrave.

Lord *Mulgrave* observed, in reply to Mr. Holdsworth, that he could put the Admiralty in the way of coming to the proofs of several of the things he had mentioned in his speech, he might rest assured that the Board would leave nothing undone to bring the offenders to punishment.—The selling of the rigging of prizes was merely, in consequence of the difference which sometimes was found between the rigging of foreign ships and that of our own; but if cables fit for service were cut up, it was a grievance which called loudly for redress: the sales, however, in all the yards, were carried on under the immediate inspection of the commissioners, officers of rank and merit; and who, he believed, from a regard for their own honour, would not suffer such gross practices, as the honourable member complained of, to exist. As to the combinations he had mentioned, he really did not know of any means to prevent them, but those which were already in use: the sales were all advertised; and if people would not attend them, to break the combinations, he saw no remedy, no more than there was in London, to prevent the combination of brokers at an auction: on the other hand, he had known several instances, where the Admiralty had, with a degree of hardship to captors, compelled them to sell their prizes to Government, at a far inferior price, than they could have had at a regular sale. As for the transports, and the particular case mentioned by the honourable member, where the freight cost ten times as much as the cargo, he could only say, that sometimes such circumstances might unavoidably happen: a transport, hired for the month, might by contrary winds, &c. be prevented from being employed in carrying any thing, but what was first put on board of her; in the last war, from similar circumstances, it was said, that the water sent out to our fleet in Quiberon-bay, cost Government several shillings per gallon: and yet, in cases of this kind, it was not politic to discharge the ship, because it was with difficulty the transports could be kept in the public service, while there were such great offers held out for them by the merchants; and he could assure the hon. member, that if the public lost on one ship, it gained on others; for he understood from the Comptroller of the Navy, that many endeavours had been made by the owners of transports in the public service to be released by the Navy Board from their contracts, because they could employ their ships to so much more advantage in the merchants service: but these endeavours had always been resisted.

The idea of introducing house carpenters into the dock-yards, was specious and imposing; but he believed it to be nearly impracticable;

practicable; for such were the rooted prejudices of the ship carpenters, that they could not bear that persons not regularly bred to their business, should be introduced to work among them to their own great injury, as they should by these means, find apprentices less serviceable to themselves, because less wanted in such circumstances by government; and he believed, that so rooted were those prejudices, that if the plan suggested of introducing house carpenters into the yards should be adopted, the lives of these men would not be in safety; and indeed, some regard ought to be paid even to the prejudices of men who continue constant in the public yards, when they might find more advantage by working in the private ones. A plan had been carried into execution some few years ago, from which great advantage might be derived: the shipwrights were obliged to take a certain number of apprentices, and no more at a time, to instruct in their business: they were not permitted to take as many as they might wish for at first; but by degrees, they were allowed to take in more, so that there should be always a constant supply and succession of young men regularly trained up to the business.

Lord Howe said, that the honourable member, who had on Thursday made a motion against the Admiralty, could not possibly word a censure more severe against that board, than might be found in the face of the present estimates: here his Lordship went into a minute detail of them, to prove his assertion. He then took a general view of the conduct of the board; and urged, that the navy could not have been worse managed than it had been under the present commission: but still, if the First Commissioner should be removed in consequence of a vote of censure passed by the House, he did not see by whom he should be replaced. He asked if an honourable Admiral, so often alluded to, (Keppel) would accept of the office? He asked if the noble Lord on the floor (Mulgrave) thought himself sufficiently qualified for the office? In a word, he wished to know if Lord Sandwich should be removed to-morrow, who was the person who would willingly succeed him; or who the person was, whom the House would recommend as a successor? Would the noble Lord who had a seat at the Admiralty Board, and who seemed to have the countenance of the minister in that House—would he take the command?—A Lord of the Admiralty was now greater than an Admiral, and perhaps he might aspire to it. Having mentioned the difficulty of procuring a new arrangement, he urged the necessity of union. He recommended to all parties to reflect on the fable of the old man's legacy to his children—the bundle of twigs: if they would all unite for their country, he did not doubt but she would soon resume her wonted lustre and superiority in the world. He blamed the Admiralty for dilatoriness in building their ships; in leaving them to rot in their frames, like the Royal Sovereign: at the same time; he said, that a ship might be too soon built; and that he did not believe the story of the French ship, that had been launched in ninety-five days after her keel had been laid: he believed the French officer might have told the honourable member's friend so, but the natural levity and vivacity of a Frenchman, and the great desire he has to surprize strangers, and impress them with an idea of the greatness and power of France, might have made the of-

ficer exaggerate a little in the instance alluded to. He mentioned the case of the Brilliant, which was a mere job. The ship was taken into commission by government, and was, he understood, repairing in the King's yard.

Mr. Fox.

Mr. Fox in reply to the noble Lord's question, whether an hon. admiral, meaning an honourable relation of his, who was not then present, would accept of the place of Lord Sandwich, said, that he had no authority from that admiral to speak for him on such an occasion; yet he believed he might venture to say, that at the time should come when his hon. relation could accept such a place with honour to himself, he would not refuse it. At the same time he must say, that if his hon. relation should be disinclined to accept of that post, the nation could not be at a loss for a naval minister, when the noble Lord who had just spoken was in being. He agreed with the noble Lord, that an union of all parties (who had not contributed to the ruin of the empire) might perhaps restore this country to its wonted greatness; and he believed nothing could contribute more to create such an union, than the removal of Lord Sandwich; however, if such an event took place, he hoped the House would never so far infringe upon the just prerogative of the crown, as to point out to the King who was the most fit person to replace him: it was right, it was precedented, it was constitutional in that House, to remove bad ministers: it was the business of the crown to make choice of good ones to succeed them. According to the notice he had given them, he repeated that he would again make the same motion which had been rejected in the committee; but though it should be carried (and from what he had seen since the last division on the subject, he did not doubt but it would) still those who should vote for the censure, would not be pledged by that vote, to vote for an address to remove Lord Sandwich; that would be entirely a new question; though, for his own part, he thought that one vote must naturally lead to the other.—However, let the success be what it might, he certainly would renew his motion on Wednesday next in the House; and the decision upon it, unlike that of the committee, should go down upon record to posterity.

Lord Mulgrave.

Lord Mulgrave arose, observing, that he begged leave to reply to something which fell from the noble Lord, (Lord Howe) in which he considered his conduct particularly censured. The noble Lord had censured him for aspiring to be first Lord of the Admiralty: he did not know of any circumstance in his conduct which could authorize the noble Lord to impute to him such ambition. Had he been insolent in his office? Had he presumed on being a Commissioner of the Admiralty to aspire to be first Lord? He begged leave to advert to his conduct, wherein he hoped it would appear that he had asserted nothing respecting Lord Hawke, but what became a captain of a man of war to say of so great an admiral. But, in his official capacity, he thought there was a greater freedom to be allowed his sentiments of a superior professional officer, when considered officially. The noble Lord (Lord Howe) had observed, in respect to Lord Hawke not having been so great a naval minister as he was a naval commander, he thought it was in the nature of circumstances, in which he had adduced a reason in proof, of his not conceiving it possible for a man to be

so excellent in directing a machine, without being equally competent to its arrangements. He should not controvert this example with the noble Lord. He should only produce him some facts as instances of the truth of what he had asserted of Lord Hawke in a former debate. Admiral Anson and Torrington were known to be as great naval ministers as they were naval commanders; but Lord Anson and Lord Hawke were more able commanders than they were ministers. In regard to speaking professionally in that House, as he had always thought it improper, he had always taken every care to avoid it. For this reason he considered the House not competent to judge of professional investigations: they were only calculated to mislead the judgments of those whose opinions should be founded on a conviction of their propriety. But as none, except professional men, can understand professional disquisitions, the greater part of the House must be ignorant of such debates. He would give an instance: suppose a friend asked him, on a professional question debated between the noble Lord and himself, "how he was to give his vote?" He should certainly answer, "agreeable to your judgment." To which his friend would undoubtedly reply, "but this is a question in which I have no judgment." In this case, he must then, to answer properly, desire his friend to give his opinion in favour of the noble Lord (Lord Howe) as he must be supposed to have most knowledge of the subject, from his superior station and experience. So that from these evident consequences, he had avoided, and should always avoid, professional arguments.

In regard to the enquiry, he had to lament that it was not entered into on fuller and broader grounds than the honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had proposed: for he, then, was assured that ample proof would have been given, that no fraud or imbecillity was the cause of our distresses. An honourable gentleman (Mr. Hussey) had censured him for now producing an account of twenty ships of the line being in readiness for next year's service, when, in a former debate, he had declared the number to be only fourteen. To this, he had only to answer, that he stated that number then as the present was stated—not in such a flattering point of view as might mislead the expectations of the House. He was always desirous of giving the quantity less than he had every reason to expect they would be in reality. In the present number, he had stated them from what ships there were in preparation, he should have set down the number at twenty-seven instead of twenty.

Colonel Barré arose to inform the House, that he never heard such full and complete information of abuses laid before that House, as had been stated by his honourable friend (Mr. Hussey) and Mr. Holdsworth. Would they call this declamation? They had asked for information, and it had been granted to them. If such abuses were existing, as had been asserted to that House, was there not the greatest reason to believe that the present existed? Not that he meant any reflection against the Lords of the Admiralty before him. No! they were not his object. They were puny Lords, when compared to the object he had in his mind.

The noble Lord (Lord Mulgrave) had asked in a former debate upon this question, whether ships were to spring up like mushroom rooms? Why, the noble Lord, on the present day, had proved they

they do. There were six of these mushroom ships in the present estimates. He then observed that the honourable gentleman (J. Luttrell) had stated to the House, a comparison between our navy of 1762 and that of 1781. In this statement, he thought the comparison hardly fair. For if the noble Lord in the blue ribbon could assure us of a peace, would he not consider it necessary to have an equal force in times of peace as on the greatest emergencies in war? Surely he would. As the enemy, being fully apprized of your power, would then more readily grant the terms which might be the object of your war. But in the peace of 1762, our ships were necessarily inferior to what they were in 1758, from the great exertions and services of our fleet in several parts of the globe. So that to compare our situation of 1781 with that of 1762, was by no means impartial. He then read a comparative view of our fleet in 1758 and 1781, from which it appeared we were now inferior. But, notwithstanding, he did not mean to fetter the hands of government in this hour of necessity. He would not have the House understand him in such a light. All he meant was, that they would see the necessity of a reformation of conduct, and an enquiry into those abuses of which they had been informed. An amendment of such frauds were the object of his sentiments. It had been observed in respect to the sale of condemned stores, that they were advertised. To this he dissented—they were not advertised—and he would explain in what manner they were not advertised. It was true, these articles were inserted in the public papers, but not with an intention for public sale. So that to consider the matter effectually, they were not advertised for public sale. It was only a form, which deluded the public of their substance. What the honourable gentleman (Mr. Holdsworth) had, therefore stated to the House in so satisfactory a manner, he hoped would meet the serious attention of that board. Before the right honourable gentleman concluded, he observed that if any gentleman could satisfactorily set the conduct of the Navy Board in its proper point of view, it was the comptroller of that board. Not that he had had any conference with him on the subject; for he had not seen him—to converse with him for five and thirty years. However, he had such a confidence in his ability, official knowledge, and character, that there was nothing he so much desired as to see him examined at the bar of that House. But of this he despaired. He should, he said, conclude with recommending it to the House to grant the supplies contained in the estimates then on the table; for though they were enormous, yet in the present alarming state of things the supply must be granted.

Lord Mulgrave

Lord *Mulgrave* arose, and said a few words in reply. Observing that when enquiries of the present nature were entered into, it was the cry of the other part of the House, that the objects of that enquiry would produce only such witnesses as, being dependent, were obliged to discover no secret of office that might tend to criminate the object of such an enquiry. They, therefore, objected to have such witnesses examined. And now the right hon. gentleman (Col. Barré) had expressed his anxiety to have the comptroller of that board, examined at the bar, in respect to its conduct.

Colonel

Colonel *Barré* said a few words in reply.

Col. *Barré*.

Sir *William James* explained the case of the Brilliant, so far as he was concerned.

Sir *William James*.

The several propositions were read, and the sums granted without any division.

Feb. 15. Adjourned; there not being a sufficient number of members to proceed to a ballot.

Feb. 16. Adjourned for the same reason.

Feb. 18. Mr. *Montagu*, agreeable to the notice he gave on Mr. *Montagu* Thursday last, informed the House, that he had turned on his mind the late shameful practice of presenting petitions complaining of undue elections, and afterwards without the least notice to the House withdrawing them; as much injury might arise from a continuance of such practice, he should, to prevent the like in future, and hinder the House from being surprized, move that whenever a motion is made to withdraw a petition complaining of an undue election, that the consideration of the said motion be deferred until such future day as the House may appoint, provided at the same time, that not less than three days notice be given.

Sir *M. W. Ridley* was of opinion, that three days was by no means sufficient notice, as gentlemen might be in the country, and not able to attend in the time; that the place he had the honour to represent (Newcastle) was of such a distance, that eight days would not be sufficient. He likewise hoped, the honourable gentleman would not stop at that one motion, as there were many other parts of Mr. Grenville's bill that required amendment, particularly that of preventing frivolous and vexatious petitions, by making the parties that presented them liable to the costs; for although the petition against him had been by the indulgence of the House withdrawn, yet his door was surrounded by persons brought up at a vast expence from Newcastle as witnesses, he not knowing, until the day the petition was withdrawn, that any thing of the kind was intended.

Mr. *Montagu* said, the reason of his making the present motion, was only to prevent the House from being surprized whenever a motion to withdraw a petition for the future should come before them; they would be competent to defer such motion, as long as should appear to them necessary.

The motion was made a standing order of the House.

Sir *Harbord Harbord*, on the order of the day being read for taking into consideration the report on the Cricklade election, said, he looked upon it as his indispensable duty, as chairman of the committee that tried that election, to inform the House, there appeared most flagrant acts of bribery and corruption at the said election. That such abuses had been committed, as called loudly for the interference of parliament to prevent the like in future; he therefore moved, That the report of the committee be then read, which was,

" That it appeared to the committee, that the most glaring acts of bribery had been used at the Election for a member to serve in parliament for the borough of Cricklade in the county of Wilts."

" That

"That it appeared to the committee, that the abuses committed in the said election called for the serious attention of Parliament."

On that report, he said, he should, with the permission of the House, beg leave to bring in a bill to prevent bribery and corruption at any ensuing election in the borough of Cricklade, which being granted, he next moved, that no writ be issued for the borough of Cricklade before that day two months; the reason for not issuing a writ, he said, was to give sufficient time to enquire into, and adopt the proper measures for preventing any like abuses. That the electors of that borough were corrupt beyond most others, was to be seen, as out of 240 voters, which the borough consisted of, 83 had already been convicted of bribery, and there were now actions laid against 43 others on the same head.

Lord Al-
thorpe.

Lord *Althorpe* said, he could not, as one of the members of the committee on that election, sit without giving his assent to the motion of his honourable friend; and to declare to the House, that he never knew such flagrant abuses, as appeared to have been transacted in that election.

The Speaker now left the chair, and the House resolved into a committee, on the bill for the better regulating the militia of this kingdom.—Most of the members quitting the House,

Sir Edward
Aftley.

Sir *Edward Aftley* said, he was ashamed to see the public business, and that of the first consequence, so slightly attended to. He then made a few objections to some clauses of the bill, and after a short conversation between him and the Secretary at war, the Speaker resumed the chair, and the House adjourned.

END OF THE FIFTH VOLUME.

